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Tom Sagar eyes up our Deputy Dawginator after finishing a fine second at the Tough One ☺ Suttty



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COMMENT

We're only in March and already it feels as though I've spent more time in transit – a lot of it actually in a Transit – than I've spent at home. Oh yes, just like the 'open-minded' couple two doors down with palm trees in their garden the season's in full swing and it's going to get a lot worse before it gets even a little bit better.

Perhaps 'worse' isn't the right word. After a winter of inactivity it feels good to be out and about hitting race tracks up and down the country, pork-loading at Little Chefs and other roadside eateries and enduring numerous near death experiences as Suttys guns Trandawg™ to within an inch of its pitiful 2.3 litre diesel-powered life.

Bikes, greasy spoons and white knuckle rides have been part of my life for as long as I can remember. I've touched upon my dear old dad's driving in this column in the past and while Suttys technique behind the wheel is scarily similar, advances in both van and breakfast technology have made the whole travelling experience much more pleasant. One particular journey from hell is indelibly etched into my mind...

En route to a two-day schoolboy national in what must have been 1978 we stopped for some M-way nourishment just south of Birmingham. These were the days before food hygiene had been invented and the serving woman/man (I'm still not entirely sure which as 'she' combined pendulous breasts resting perilously close to the hot plate with a better 'tache than my old man – and he was rocking a full '70s beard) had more food on her apron than you got with the 50p Full English special.

Once fully fed and back in the T+MX Transit, we'd got a couple more junctions down the M5 when my long-suffering sister started to feel unwell. The ever-present petrol fumes in the back of the van – nauseating enough without a bellyful of deep-fried badness – began to work their magic and she projectile hurled all over our faithful dog 'Badger'. Now these days I've got a pretty strong constitution but back then it was all too much for my delicate eight-year-old digestive system so I started yakking as well and the pair of us didn't stop until we lay convulsing on the grass verge. Remember the Family Guy episode where they drink Ipecac? Well it was a bit like that – search Youtube for 'who wants chowder' and you'll see what I mean...

Back on topic now (just ignore that little tale as part of my ongoing 'therapy') and we've been all over the place this last month. First up Suttys and I flew out to Murcia in Spain to pull together the new rideguide with Gordon Crockard. It was a rushed couple of days that culminated in a mad dash to the airport to return Scott Probert's rent-a-wreck and catch our flight home. The car in question had been given the full MX treatment. "Orange dent, lemon dent, lemon dent," explained Scott as he gave us a guided tour of the Fiat Panda's dimpled bodywork. And both rear tyres were flat-spotted thanks to a well-known MX2 rider's three-mile journey with the handbrake engaged but this was only noticeable at low speed so fortunately didn't hamper our airport run. Anyway, it was a very productive trip and you can check out the first instalment of GC's MX masterclasses in this very issue with online video back-up at www.dirtbikerider.com

After Spain we had a few days to regroup before it was off to The Tough One extreme enduro at Nantmawr Quarry where David Knight made something very, very hard look very, very easy. Then the following weekend we turned a 560-mile round trip into a day out when we took in the new-look Maxxis MX championship at Little Silver in Devon. Now with three 20-minute races and a Superpole qualifying system, the series has been given a big kick up the arse and first impressions are very positive with loads of exciting racing and plenty to keep the spectators' attention.

Once this issue's at the printers next up on our tour itinerary is the Hawkstone International, followed by the opening round of the Red Bull Pro Nationals at Foxhill and then round two of the Maxxis at Mallory before we get a weekend off – by which point I'm going to be a 20-stone blob with pig-meat poisoning, a nervous twitch and a fear of motorway travel.

Ah well, it's a dirty job but someone's got to do it...

Sean



NEWSH^{PAW}UND!

DEPUTY DAWG'S DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS...

Just as the winter's coming to an end and the snow's retreating more rapidly than the Italian Army, our good mate Alexei 'the Kalashnikov' Koleskinov has come up with a grand old way to get to the track with your bike when everyone else is snowed in. Is it perfect? Neigh! But until someone comes along with something better it'll have to do – well in comrade!

After what felt like an eternity of waiting the British outdoor racing season has finally started again and in fine style too with a cracking pair of awesome events – WOR's Tough One and the opening round of the Maxxis British Motocross Championships. There are ace in-depth reports on these events later in this issue – as well as plenty of other awesome bits and bobs – so I'm not gonna spoil the surprise and let you know who won what here but there's a whole bunch of other dirty gossip that I'm gonna let you in on like this next little titbit...

With a little luck lady-banger-laden men's weekly mag Nuts will also be featuring full-throttle four-bangers real soon as it transpires that the management team are actually mad-keen motocross fans as well as lovers of lady lumps, cricket stumps, that cartoon The Flumps and some other stuff too. After bumping into the Chamberlain boys and forging a friendship at a recent function, the top-brass at the titillating title have agreed to sponsor the MVR-D Suzuki squad for the full season ahead which for Ezra, Mark, G-Man, Justin and the crew is a pretty sweet deal. The eagle-eyed among you will have already spied the Nuts logo on the sideplates of the team bikes so now's the time to support those who support the sport and p-p-p-pick up a copy of Nuts – for future features with Carl Nunn and Matiss Karro of course.

Speaking of supporting those who support the sport – and vice versa – I'm currently in my fifth week of avoiding Coca Cola products like the plague after the giant drinks corporation's Relentless brand dropped Rob Hooper's Suzuki squad in the **** despite offering assurances of

ongoing financial support all through the off-season. With his budget dramatically reduced Rob had no choice but to release Martin Barr (now with PAR Honda) and Scott Columb (still at home in New Zealand) from their contracts and finds himself in the unenviable position of trying to find a big-name sponsor while he has no big-name riders. If you think you can help Hoops out give the man a call on **01889 583405** or **07812 597581** or drop him an email at rob.hooper.racing@btinternet.com

With the call from Relentless coming so close to the start of the season it's amazing that either rider was able to find a ride and the PAR deal for Barty Marr only fell into place after 17-year-old Scott Elderfield sensationally quit professional motocross midway through a pre-season training trip to the States. That's all we know for sure at present but keep an eye on www.dirtbikerider.com for more news as we get it.





It's all about getting the ponies to the ground

Scuba Steve's having a tough time of it over in the US of A...



© Andrew Wiley

Over in America the supercross series has been truckin' along and just like last month Suzuki's Ryan Dungey leads the way in the 450 points chase, only this time he's stretched his lead to 20 points over Josh Hill. Dungey starts the month off slow and steady with a run of 4-6-4-2 results but bounces back to win again in Atlanta. But the big story this month has been the awesome form of Ryan Villopoto who wins three of this month's Main Events and comes fourth in San Fran but unravels all his hard work with a 19th in the state of Georgia after a crash.

Another racer who knows all about those is Englishman Max Anstie who goes down hard at Anaheim 3 causing his heat race to be red-flagged and busting his hip in the process. The ginger ninja joins compatriot Tommy Searle (who recently appeared on BBC TV's 'Homes Under the Hammer') on the sidelines but should make a speedy recovery and is hoping to be back in time for when the West Coast Lites resume battle in Seattle at the end of April.

With the SX series swinging over to Indianapolis then Atlanta the East Coast Lites championship has swung into full effect with two wins for reigning champion Christophe Pourcel. The new title hunt hasn't been so kind to Brit battlers Adam Chatfield and Steven Clarke though with Chatfield the only one making a Main so far – he finished 14th in Atlanta on his Confused Clothing Kawasaki – while Clarke's still yet to transfer to a point-paying 15-lapper which is disappointing for the City Suzuki/Nitro Circus rider who qualified for all eight of 'em in 2009. Let's hope the 2005 85cc world champ has better luck in Daytona and beyond...

The Florida beach resort's annual Bike Week is actually in full swing as DBR goes to press with the opening round of the GNCC series kick-starting proceedings. Josh Strang wins the main race overall while Wrexham's very own Ratboy Jason Thomas takes the XC2 class win for 250F machines as fellow Brit Rudy Austin dominates the Vet B division for riders over the age of 30.

Events to look out for this month include the opening rounds of the British Masters and Red Bull Pro Nationals which unfortunately clash over the weekend of March 13/14 – the RBPNS kick off at Foxhill near Swindon while the Masters starts its season at Mallory Park. One week after that the Maxxis series also heads to Mallory – that'll be on the 21st then – while any schoolies or clubman adult riders who fancy a blast around the former GP venue get their opportunity on April 4/5 when 90 Racing MXC hold their Schoolboy GP there over the Easter weekend. For more details on that event check out www.90racingmxc.com on the world wide web...

One week before that another exciting event goes off and that's the brand-new British Enduro Sprint Championship. Basically the BEC removes all the hard and difficult to understand stuff from a time card enduro and leaves the fun bit behind – the special tests. The opening round will be held at Chavenage Farm, Tetbury, Gloucestershire on **March 27/28** and has already attracted a top class entry including Taddy Blazusiak, Joakim Ljunggren, Daryl Bolter, Greg Evans and Tough One winner David Knight who's particularly pumped about this new style of off-road racing.

"Being a consistently fast special test racer is something that takes years to learn so having a series in the UK where riders spend all day competing on special tests is a really good thing," says DK. "It's taken me years of competing in the world championship to fully understand what is needed to get fast times so I think the format will really bring on British riders. It's a great opportunity to move enduro sport forward because it's all about racing for the riders, which means it's also going to be good for spectators."

Admission for fans who want to spectate at this spectacular event costs just **£7.50** per person with under 14s getting in for free. Everyone gets a free programme and anyone that pays to attend on the Saturday can come back on the Sunday for no additional charge. There's full catering and toilet

As a special treat to everyone who's read this far we've teamed up with top bloke and two-stroke enthusiast Matt Palmer who also owns wicked clothing company West Coast Racing (check out their full range of designs online at www.west-coast-racing.co.uk) who's super-keen to offer all Newshound readers the chance to win one of five sweet lookin' WCR t-shirts.

To be in with a chance of being one of the five lucky winners all you've got to do is answer this simple question. Who was the last rider to score an MX2 world championship point on a 125cc two-stroke machine?

Was it:
A: Antoine Meo
B: Fabio Balducci
C: Keith Bonaducci
D: Sebastien Tortelli

When you think you know the answer you need to write it on the back of a postcard or sealed down envelope along with your name, address, a daytime telephone number and t-shirt size then send it to us at **Newshound Comp**, DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4AG.

The first five correct entrants drawn out of our lucky hat by Lucky Pierre at noon on **April 15** will each win a randomly selected West Coast Racing tee. Yay!

facilities on site and the whole shebang is easily found from the A46 just north of the A46/A4135 junction north east of Wotton-under-Edge but south of Stroud. There are still a handful of spaces left for riders who fancy giving this groundbreaking series a go – check out www.enduro-sprint.com for more details.

And finally some super stop press stylee product news from No Fear who have just this minute released these all-new The Rush motocross goggles. Set to be launched to the US public on April 1 but not in Europe until 2011 – I s**t ye not – they've already been tested by No Fear athlete Jason Lawrence in both moto and supercross situations with J-Law giving them a double thumbs up for comfort, function and durability – it looks like the goggle wars just got a little bit hotter!



WIN!WIN!WIN!

SIGNED BRAD ANDERSON RACE SHIRT PLUS
FOX RACING RIDING KIT WORTH OVER £350

Reigning British MX1 champion Brad Anderson is one of the toughest, most tenacious riders in the world and even when the chips are down you know he's gonna put in 100 per cent effort and do whatever it takes to come up with the goods. And because both Brad and the friendly folk at Fox Europe are good old boys they've come up with some goods that you – DBR's awesome readers – have got a good chance of winning provided you can answer a simple Brad Anderson-related question.

The prize package that's up for grabs includes a signed **Ando jersey**, a complete set of **Type-O Negative racewear** (jersey, pants, gloves) and a **V2 Black Flag helmet** – all in your size – plus a pair of pimpin' **The Main goggles** to seal the deal. Basically there's everything there that you'll need to rip up the track in a Bad Brad stylee. So if you fancy getting your hands on all this sweet swag what we need to know is which former Fox-sponsored MX athlete is Brad Anderson named after?

Is it:

A: Brad O'Leary

B: Brad Turner

C: Brad Lackey

D: Bradley Banks

Once you've decided on your answer log your laptop, PC or Mac onto www.dirtbikerider.com where you'll then need to follow the competition link, type in your answer, fill out the fields and hit transmit. The comp closes at noon on **April 15** with the first correct entry chosen totally at random getting this awesome prize.





WHERE'S ZACH?

FIND ZACH OSBORNE AND WIN A PAIR OF TCX PRO 2 BOOTS

If you were at Little Silver for the opening round of the Maxxis series you couldn't help but be impressed by the turn of speed of speedy speedster Zach Osborne as he sped to the MX2 overall on his Bike It Cosworth Yamaha. And if you looked closely you couldn't help but be impressed by his lovely **TCX Pro 2** boots n'all.

Well courtesy of our mates at Nevis Marketing we've got a pair of Pro 2s up for grabs this month and winning them couldn't be much easier. All you've got to do is study this shot of the American throttle jockey, then flick through the pages of this issue of DBR until you find his head superimposed onto someone else's body.

Once you've worked out Where's Zach you need to text the word **DBRZACH** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **April 15** with the first correct answer chosen at random getting the boots (don't worry, we'll give the winner a bell to get their size)...



GOLDENPAD

WIN A PAIR OF RENTHAL HANDLEBARS

Renthal, as everyone knows, builds champions – and now one lucky reader can have their very own piece of this winning heritage.

Have a close look at our pic of this golden Renthal bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to 81800. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on April 15 with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...

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THE REVEREND CLUCKING HELL!

THE SEASON'S STARTED AND JAKE'S GOT OFF TO A FLYER

Words by Jake Nicholls Photo by Davey Mulligan

I've got to say I've missed the Monday after a race meeting. It's a strange day for us racers – sometimes you feel fine and like you went and had a Sunday roast the day before, then on the other hand sometimes you feel ill and like you've done a few rounds with Tyson.

My normal Monday routine is to get everything cleaned up – helmets, boots, race kit and goggles – but my bike stays with the team so I'm very lucky that I don't have to wash and prep that. I'll go for a nice cycle then stretch off once I'm finished. Cycling along this morning was a perfect time to clear my mind after the stress and madness that it went through on race day, at peace holding onto the bars I was blessed with a nice sunny day as well. Bonus!

Anyway, I hope you're all well and excited about the new season that's kicked off. When I last wrote I was still in Spain. We did a couple days riding in Murcia at Gordy's set-up and the tracks were so much better than we rode up north so that was cool, then we had a day off and booked into a local regional race on the Sunday. It was a well put on meeting with two 20-minute races. I was there to have fun, qualified first and went 3-2. Alvaro Lozano, the Spanish MX3 rider, won it on his 450 Yami from myself and Irwin.

The next day we packed up and I flew home. I had a few days off the bike when I got home – to rest up and partly because my practice bike was still with the mechanics at the workshop in Holland. The day before I went to Spain I met Woody from Hope Technology who are a new sponsor of mine this year and picked up my new Orange 224 downhill bike that he had sorted out for me. Hope are a massive company in the bicycle world and make quality components such as brakes and wheels etc so my Orange had been pimped out. A big thanks to Woody and everyone at Hope for hooking me up!

So as I said I picked that up the day before I left for Spain so it sat in my bedroom for two weeks. But fear not, as soon as I got home I was straight on the blower to Rich T and Mr Geoffrey Walker to get out and christen the Virgin 224. A few phonecalls here and there and we had a plan. I drove down to the Marsh and stayed with Sammy D and the next day I was en route to Geoff's workshop, then we were on the road to meet Rich T and get on with some riding. We had a awesome day and the last run we could barely see going down the hill.

From there I stayed at Sam's again then hit the road in the morning to Dunkerque. I had a total nightmare of a day and had to wait in delays for five hours at the Channel Tunnel, did a little riding then they graded the track so I sacked that idea off, loaded my bike up with a box of spares from Wayne then hit the road home. I had a banging weekend of riding and loved being back

in the muddy/sandy conditions of my home tracks. I was also loving being back to my usual routine of boxing training when I got home. I've been enjoying it so much and recently Tuesday night fight club had been getting a good turn-out up in the shed – all hell has been breaking loose up there!

I've done a fair bit of riding at home recently – some of you may have seen the video my neighbour Jamie Niblock did of me while practising a week before the first British. It's an all-weather track luckily as I'm sure most of you right now are just about over the rain we've been having but it's getting better. I'm sitting here now at 17.15 and the sun's shining through the window so roll on evening rides with your mates I say, woohoo.

I took another trip down south to do some DH again, this time Rich T and I went over to Wales and met a fella called Dan Stanbridge who's also a pro DH rider and we had a van uplift day of our own in the hills of South Wales. One hell of a day! One of the hills I think I would have really struggled to get down on my MX bike so it was hardcore but awesome fun and good for bike skills.

I practised sprint laps and loads of starts last week, then I took a trip down to Weston to Rich's house and from there we went to a place called Cwmcarn in Wales to do some more downhill on Friday. We had an awesome day and I progressed some more on the quiet little Orange after following Rich for as long as I could before he ripped off. Then it was a rest day and time to head to Little Silver.

On the way there I was under the assumption that it was going to be a total bog but the track was sweet – overnight rain made it a little sloppy but otherwise it was good. It was strange being back at the races but awesome at the same time. The Superpole thing in qualifying was pretty cool and I got third and I holeshot the first race and pulled about five seconds by lap four. But the armpump kicked in and I made a stupid mistake and tipped over, fired the bike up and struggled with my arms to sixth.

I holeshot the second race and lead for a while before Osborne came past – he was riding better lines and a bit looser than I was. But I didn't panic and rode to a strong second. My arm's were loosening up a bit and I rode a little bit better in the last race. Zach rode well and passed me for the lead so I just rode a steady, smooth race and got second and second overall which I was happy with in conditions that aren't what I'm best at. I've got so much more in the tank but I'm just using my head at the minute.

PS #45 Herd shirts and chicken suits will be available real soon...



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THREE LOVE!

BRITISH SIDECARCROSS SERIES
KICKS OFF AT CANADA HEIGHTS

Words and photo by Shaun Fowler

It's not just the two-wheeled warriors who've got a busy season ahead – the three-wheelers are getting ready to fire up their outfits in anger for the British sidecarcross championship which gets under way at Canada Heights on March 28.

Britain's #1 driver Stuart Brown is out to win his eighth championship along with crewman Luke Peters who has five titles to his name. Stuart had a fantastic season last year, finishing ninth in the world with an awesome second place overall in Germany at the final round. Talk about saving the best until last!

The pair's biggest challenge comes from the Millard brothers from Frome. Dan and Joe have made a big impression both on our shores and abroad, finishing third in Britain and 17th in the GPs and were the only crew to beat Brown last season.

Other teams to look out for include returnees Scott Wilkinson with Dave Keane in the chair and Andy and Tim Breacher. And keep an eye on two up-and-coming young crews – the Jenkins brothers and the spectacular Stickle/Jarvis pairing.

Sidecarcross doesn't get much publicity but it's one of the most entertaining sports to watch as a spectator – and one of the most punishing for participants. If you've never seen it before the Sidcup club has all the info you need – check out www.sidcupmotorcycleclub.co.uk and put the date in your diary.

And if the sport at British championship level floats your boat then the British sidecarcross GP's on April 18 at the famous Langrish track near Petersfield.

DATES AND VENUES

BRITISH SIDECARCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

Rnd 1	Canada Heights	March 28
Rnd 2	Lyng	April 11
Rnd 3	Little Silver	April 25
Rnd 4	Asham Woods	May 31
Rnd 5	Wrangway	June 27
Rnd 6	Wakes Colne	July 25
Rnd 7	Wattisfield Hall	September 19

CLUBMAN SIDECARCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

Rnd 1	Binstead	March 21
Rnd 2	Whaddon Farm	April 2
Rnd 3	Asham Woods	April 5
Rnd 4	Dunmow	May 2
Rnd 5	Rusper	July 18
Rnd 6	Pollwynn Farm	September 5

CROCKSTAR

SPANISH FLYER!

GORDY JETS IN FROM SPAIN, KICKS A FEW ASSES AT LITTLE SILVER AND THEN HEADS BACK TO THE SUN. NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Sutti

Hola! Hola! Hola! So I am still in Spain right now and my winter training camps are almost over for this pre-season. It's been very good and I've been very satisfied at everybody's improvement on track and in general attitude. That makes me feel good that I have helped people and I am really glad to be able to offer my experience back into the sport.

I've also been able to learn a lot about how to make the camps better and run more efficiently for the future. For sure I will be spending many a winter down in Murcia running these camps and creating the opportunity to have guys get out riding, testing and practising for their seasons ahead.

As for my own racing programme for 2010 in MX I am super-pumped with the completion of a continuation of my relationship with the Paul Bird Motorsport Kawasaki Racing Team. We had our deal doing the British SX series and now we have extended our connection into the Maxxis British Motocross Championship and other events similar.

Leo Cordingley will spin the spanners mechanicing on the KXF450 bikes we will race. The hybrid KX250 two-stroke will also have a few outings too and I will be very excited to get her on the main jet singing on an outdoor MX track. That bike is fantastic and I loved every lap of the supercross races over the winter on it. We have some real good product support from some of the WSB team's technical sponsors and I know once we have a bit of time when I get back from Spain we will be able to produce a mega 450 machine.

On the home front in Norn Iron I have been given the use of a KXF450 from Norman Watt Motorcycles to compete in as many of the local championship events as my British commitments allow. I can see I am all of a sudden in for a very busy year with travelling and racing but, hey, I love it!

No Fear has gone beyond the call of duty and is looking after me very well on the clothing front (thanks Phil xx), MRS has sorted me some SG12 Gaerne boots again and Oakley will hook me up with goggles as always. And I'm back running #7...

All these deals were done at the last hour

and I have to thank all involved in getting me on the startline for the first round of the Maxxis championship at Little Silver within 10 days of me making the deal with PBM. The race went excellent considering what I asked of myself. I hadn't been acting in the manner of a racer since the des Nations and I also had to deal with the logistics issue of me coming to the race from my base in Spain.

I landed into Bournemouth Airport at 10pm on Saturday night and then drove two hours across to Little Silver, arriving at the hotel and into bed at around 1am. Woke up at 6.30am and got to the track to see my bike for the first time and get a look at the track too before coming to terms with the adjustment in temperature and the shock to the system of what mud is again. The day I left Spain was 24 degrees and on arrival at Little Silver it was a lot, lot less.

Anyways, poor me managed to leave the first round only 15 points off the championship lead. That is very encouraging for me as I can tell you the preparation that was available was slim. Round two will also be a tight one for me to be in tip top shape for but I will be giving it all I've got as I am in no mood to get left behind in the points chase. That would be naughty.

The town where I live asked me to do a presentation of their sports awards for the Ards Borough Council. I had to do a 45-minute motivational speech on the stage to the audience of the awards night. I was mega nervous at first but once I got my tongue wagging it was dead easy. I had some laugh at myself when I looked back at some of the stories I told!

The other wee job I had to get sorted was to showcase one of my British championship winning bikes at the Eddie Irvine Sports Museum in Bangor. I was well proud whenever they asked me to be part of the display and I know it is a great advert for the sport of MX in Northern Ireland. It does make me feel a bit old though being represented in a museum! Ha ha – gimpy auld Gordy!

So life is spot on and all I can leave you with for now is let the good times roll...





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SWORDY

SILVER LINING!

THE OPENING ROUND OF THE MAXXIS DOESN'T GO SWORDY'S WAY BUT HE CAN STILL DRAW SOME POSITIVES FROM IT...

Words by **Stephen Sword** Photo by **Sutty**

Last month was pretty stressful as the first British was so early. Making sure I was ready, bike fit and happy with all the testing we did on the bike so soon in the year was not ideal but, hey, it's the same for everyone. The weeks leading up to the first British I was out on the bike, training hard and eating healthy which I do hate after the off season as you get used to the taste of chocolate and the odd glass of wine – that will have to wait until October now!

One of the rare Sundays I had off we went down to spend time with DT, Gail and their little girl April who is just a few months older than Ayrton. We met at their local pub for lunch and Ayrton just ate the whole time – not joking he can eat loads, food is his life. We went to DT's house after and the babies played while we talked MX. It was a really nice day out. At the moment we're struggling to get Ayrton to crawl or even move for that matter – he's now nearly 11 months and nothing, no movement. Jodie's spending hours trying to encourage him to crawl but still no joy. I say he takes after his mother and expects me to wait on him, she agrees!

I have been doing the odd bit of DIY around the house and pictures and mirrors that I've been meaning to get put up after a year-and-a-half are finally hung. I must admit I'm not the best, I just don't have any patience. Let me give you an example. I went into the garage the other day to sort out my kit, opened the door and something didn't sound right so I tried to close it but it jammed on me. I was about to go to the gym so didn't have time to waste sorting it out even though it was probably a 10-minute job. Instead of being calm, I decided if I kicked it really hard it would straighten out. First kick it looked a bit better but by the third Jodie came out to tell me to just call someone. What did she know? So, yep, I gave it another boot and it flew off its hinges! I ended up calling someone out who was here in 30 minutes and fixed it in 10. I don't think he believed me that the door was like that when I opened it. Jodie was laughing so much I think that's why he was smiling.

The week leading up to Little Silver I was busy training, riding and making sure everything was prepped and ready to go. DT sorted for us

to ride a track down his way which we thought would be similar conditions. Friday was my rest day so I got the van cleaned and loaded it up with all my bits and bobs ready for the race. I have to slip an extra set of kit in now with the new race format – that's more washing on a Monday morning for Jodie which she enjoys.

That afternoon we had some family time. Jodie, Ayrton and I went out for some lunch followed by a caffeine fix at Starbucks. Later that day we took Ayrton and the dogs for a walk. Early to bed on Friday night then Saturday morning I went cycling before I left home to head down the M5 to Little Silver. With the weather forecast looking so bad Jodie and Ayrton stayed at home but would come down Sunday morning weather permitting.

When I got to the track on Saturday it wasn't too bad – they'd had a lot of rain and it was predicted to rain all night and on Sunday but luckily when race day arrived it was dry so it ended up being a really cool day weather wise. It's all changed on Sundays now and you have timed practice and the top 12 go into Superpole. I was pleased to get top spot in that with it being the first one.

The first race I went down at the start so had to come from last and ended up ninth which annoyed the hell out of me as I know I did crap by my standards. In the second race my start was still not great but better but then my tear-offs broke so I had to rip then all off so I could see. By that time I'd lost around seven positions so once again was fighting to get to the front and ended up fourth which again was not what I was looking for. Last race of the day I gated about sixth and ended up third so as you can imagine I was mad with myself as this is not acceptable.

Overall I was fourth and only seven points from the leader so I'm not worried as it's a long season. We are now doing some testing on the bike and of course loads of start practice ready for the next race. It's made me more determined to win so at least one positive has come out of Little Silver!

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Q: Why have you stopped riding the Vets championship?

Mark Jackson, Wolverhampton

A: "Truthfully I don't really have the time to prepare properly and after racing for 40 years paying to ride comes as a bit of a shock!"

Q: When you are training the CCM team do you still find time to pull on your gear and have a ride yourself?

Brendan Oliver, Staffs

A: "[Laughs] I don't because I don't want to take their confidence away! In '09 I didn't have my own bike but for 2010 CCM-RACING have kindly given me a '09 race bike so expect to see me out with Tom and Stephen soon."

Q: Of all your championships which is the most precious to you and why?

Jason Hemmings, Burnham

A: "Every one is precious Jason but the '89 championship is sweet because the '87 and '88 championships got away through injury! So to come back again and win made it special."

Q: If you, Geboers and Jobe lined up today on your championship winning 500s for a 20-minute moto around Farleigh who would be king?

Peter Dench, Swansea

A: "They couldn't beat me in the '80s but they might now – would be good though. Get Dave King to get his chequebook out and make it happen for the Nations event there in September that would draw a few in!"

Q: Have you kept all of your championship winning bikes?

Russ Woods, Durham

A: "No."

Q: Did your dad stop talking to you when you signed up with CCM?

Michael Short, Kidderminster

A: "No, he was fine but the test came when I needed to put a CCM in there overnight – he only services Honda bikes and won't have any other make through the doors. Ryan thought he would say no but he was fine, even pushed it in himself!"

Q: Did winning the des Nations as a manager make up for not winning it as a rider?

Gerald Hardwell, Avon

A: "I always enjoyed racing the Nations – the fans made it a special event – but the '94 des Nations was all about the riders. Paul, Rob and Kurt rode out of their skins but to be part of a winning team that beat the USA was a little special to say the least."

Q: In hindsight do you think you'd have been better off staying with Honda rather than signing with Kawasaki for '90?

Richard Mort, Bradford

A: "History tells us that HRC was the team to ride for. I have no regrets about leaving to Kawasaki but in hindsight it wasn't the smartest thing I've done."

Q: Did your factory 500 have more outright power than one of today's 450s?

Nick Bell, Sheffield

A: "Today's 450s are a different animal but, yes, the RC500 Honda was a beast to say the least! If you put them on the dyno there's no doubt the two-stroke would have the edge."

Q: While you are training your riders during the off-season is the regime much different now than when you were actually riding?

Sean Conning, Penzance

A: "Similar really, the biggest difference is my training motos were generally 50 minutes."



DAVE THORPE

PAYING ENTRY FEES, SPANKING THE YANKS AND LOOKING GOOD IN GOLD TROUSERS – ALL IS REVEALED AS WE PROBE QUITE POSSIBLY THE GREATEST LIVING ENGLISHMAN...

Interview and photo by JP O'Connell

Q: Did you ever ride in the US and if so did you try supercross?

Christian Baker, Marlborough

A: "Yes, I have raced a few times at the US GP, never raced supercross there though. David Bailey once rode my bike at the Honda SX test track. I turned to my boss at the time – Steve Whitelock – and said 'that's the fastest my bike will ever go around a supercross track!'"

Q: Which was the coolest set of gear you ever had?

Toby Dench, Warminster

A: "The gold Yoko pants at the end of '85."

Q: Does it surprise you that the UK has only produced one world champion since your heyday?

Roger Nash, Southport

A: "Yes and really it's a little worrying. I thought Tommy would do it but now he's in the US that won't happen unless he comes back."

"Let's hope someone will step up to the mark in the coming years."

Q: What are your long and short-term goals for CCM?

Ollie Bennett, Kent

A: "Short-term I really want to see the CCM-RACING Team win the British championship, further on I would like the public to have the opportunity I have and ride the latest CCM MX bikes."

Q: Would you prefer your daughter to grow up being interested in horses or motocross?

Marcus Baker, Plympton

A: "I was never really keen for Lewis and Ryan to ride so the prospect of April riding MX is very slim! My wife Gail has two horses so it wouldn't surprise me if a pony arrives in a few years!"

NEXT MONTH

JOSH COPPINS >>

Next month we'll be putting your questions to the evergreen Kiwi who's heading up the Aprilia factory effort in 2010 so if you're itching to ask him something email us at dbrprobe@googlemail.com



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THE EX FILES!

FACTORY KAWASAKI TEAM-MATES LAST YEAR, SEB POURCEL AND GARETH SWANEPOEL HAVE GONE THEIR SEPARATE WAYS FOR 2010 – BUT WHO WORE THE TROUSERS IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP? YOU DECIDE...

Interview by JP O'Connell Photos by KRT Press and Suttty

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film of your life?

SP: "That's difficult! Maybe Will Smith, I like him."

GS: "After his performance in *Snatch* it would have to be Brad Pitt, he's the man and all the ladies love him."

DBR: When did you last clean an air filter?

SP: "Oooh, I don't know, maybe 10 years ago."

GS: "Probably last winter back home in SA."

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

SP: "The whats! No, I don't think so!"

GS: "No chance, I wouldn't know where they are!"

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you've killed?

SP: "No, I don't think so, I don't even like fish."

GS: "No, I don't like fish and I've never hunted – to be honest I just don't like killing things."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

SP: "I've broken two, including my scaphoid, as well as some dislocations."

GS: "Jeez, my foot, leg, both wrists a couple of times, shoulder three times, my neck, my arm, a couple of toes – how many's that?"

DBR: Can you eat spaghetti without a spoon?

SP: "Yes, of course... Okay, I cut the spaghetti!"

GS: "I always eat it without a spoon, I cut it up and shovel it in with a fork!"

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

SP: "I eat a lot of raw ham, you know, prosciutto..."

GS: "I like sweets and I find it hard to go out without a pocketful of Gummi Bears. I've also usually got a tin of wine gums hidden somewhere that I grab a handful of every day!"

DBR: Do you own a pair of slippers?

SP: "Non!"

GS: "Yes, yes and I wear them every day, they're black corduroy ones! What's worse though is Tom Church came and stayed at my house in South Africa and he brought his over with him!"

DBR: "You're in second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out in the last corner for the win?"

SP: "I wouldn't try to take him out but would do everything I can to make the pass, I am not a dirty rider so would not make him crash."

GS: "Oh most definitely."

DBR: What is the highlight of your career so far?

SP: "That would be Faenza when I won my first GP as well as St Jean d'Angely when I won my home GP"

GS: "Probably '07 when I almost won in Lierop. Cairoli passed me on the last lap for the lead and I managed to finish fifth in the world."

DBR: What car do you drive?

SP: "I have a Renault Traffic that I can get my bike in."

GS: "I have a Opel Vivaro van and a Golf back home."

DBR: And if money were no object?

SP: "I am trying to get myself a Nissan 370Z."

GS: "An Audi R8."

DBR: Have you ever blamed a poor result on a non-existent 'mechanical' issue?

SP: "[Laughing] Oh yeah, for sure!"

GS: "No, I'm pretty hard on myself. I think there's even been times when there has been a performance issue and I've blamed it on myself."

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

SP: "I would like to change my mentality when on the track, I am too friendly. I have too much respect for the other riders. I am trying to change but it's not easy."

GS: "Maybe that I could have a bit more confidence on the bike. It usually takes me a little while to get going and find my feet, I'm not confident from the off."

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk.

SP: "Honestly I have never been drunk."

GS: "When I've had a few too many I get to thinking that I'm the world's best dancer!"

DBR: If you could meet any person, alive or dead, who would it be?

SP: "God!"

GS: "I wouldn't maybe mind hanging out with someone like Michael Schumacher."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

SP: "My computer with internet, my phone and my wife."

GS: "My phone, my mini DVD player and my girlfriend."

DBR: What's your favourite film?

SP: "Gladiator."

GS: "Armageddon, that's pretty cool."

DBR: What's your most annoying habit?

SP: "I always worry my mechanic when I turn up late for practice!"

GS: "I have a couple, eh! I tend to lose things all the time and I'm pretty messy but that's because I always tend to be thinking three steps in front of myself. My life's pretty chaotic, you know?"

DBR: Where is your favourite place on Earth?

SP: "At my home in the South of France."

GS: "At home with my family back in South Africa."

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

SP: "Not so much phobias but for sure I don't like snakes and spiders."

GS: "I'm pretty scared of snakes – we see a lot at home when we're out mountain biking – and I also go body boarding so I'm pretty scared of sharks."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

SP: "Maybe my first ever trophy."

GS: "I suppose that would be my house in Belgium."

DBR: Favourite race you've been in?

SP: "Either the Faenza or St Jean d'Angely races."

GS: "There's been so many but I'd say it was the GP moto I almost won in Lierop in '07..."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight?

SP: "A French rider T-boned me and we both went down, we started fighting in the middle of the track."

GS: "No, not really."

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

SP: "Yep!"

GS: "That's a tough one...that really is a tough one. I guess with all the work you put in to win I'd say yes."

DBR: How do you have your steak?

SP: "Medium rare."

GS: "Pretty much well done."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

SP: "Brunette."

GS: "Brunette."

DBR: Something about yourself nobody else knows?

SP: "One entire wall in my living room at home is covered by a painting of me racing."

GS: "I'm a bit of a film buff, I really enjoy watching movies."



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Edward Allingham puts in three scoring rides at Little Silver

GOOD TIMES!

THE IRISH ARMY HAVE ONE OF THEIR MOST SUCCESSFUL DAYS EVER AT THE BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP OPENER...

Words by **Stevie Mills** Photo by **Sutty**

It's official! The British MX season is well and truly open! And how did the 'scores on the doors' pan out for the lads from the Emerald Isle at round one of the Maxxis championship at Little Silver in Devon?

The 11-and-a-half hour deal between Gordon Crockard and Paul Bird Motorsport has enabled Ulster's finest ambassador for motocross to line up to do battle under the Kawasaki banner in the MX1 class. Fresh back from two successful training camps in Spain, GC is keen to serve up some whupass this season.

A full-on race calendar consisting of Red Bull Pro Nationals and British championships is now on the cards while GC will run under the Norman Watt Motorcycles banner at selected Ulster and Irish championship meetings. With little time to prepare his new steed, Gordy still managed to get into the mix on his 450 and the multi-time British champ earned enough points for seventh overall but more importantly is only 15 points behind series leader and defending champion Brad Anderson.

Stuart Edmonds on the TM UK scored two points in the second moto of the day while Wayne Garrett had a fruitless trip across the pond aboard his TSR KTM. Garrett found himself on the wrong end of a coming together in two of the three races.

It was the MX2 class that served up the surprise that shocked the established 250F stars as Graeme Irwin stormed through to win the opening moto of the 2010 season. The HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK youngster lost the lead to team-mate Jake Nicholls for two laps before taking command of the race on lap three, winning by some seven seconds. Taking a moto win is a major step forward for the teenager and confidence and motivation will be at an all-time high. Roll on the GPs.

Martin Barr put the PAR Honda onto the podium – it was important for Martin to start the season with a solid performance from which to

build his championship challenge. And Martin had an exceptionally strong ride in the final moto of the day, giving chase to Nicholls and overall winner Zach Osborne.

Edward Allingham enjoyed three scoring rides on his Bike It Cosworth Yamaha while other local interest Michael McCammond continues to improve and narrowly missed out on points with a 22nd in the first race of the day.

And just to cap a great day for the Irish, Natalie Kane yet again showed her class in the WMX division, taking the flag with more than a minute to spare over second place both times out. On the downside, riding that far out in front is not going to push up her speed for GPs but she looked fitter than ever and has obviously had a productive off-season.

Natalie earned the world #3 plate last year without visiting the top two steps of a GP podium – consistency is important and so is winning motos if she's to become the first ever Irish MX world champion! Now that would be something to celebrate – and, believe me, she's got the talent to do that over the next few years.

Sign of the times perhaps and certainly a crime worthy of punishment beyond the printed words of a family-orientated magazine such as DBR but motocross bike theft is on the rise. Near on every week the forums of ulstermotocross.com are full of heart-breaking stories about bike theft. Ever more devious, the scumbags have even been known to hang around local practice tracks and follow their prey home, only to return at a later date. So watch your bikes – and watch who's watching your bikes...

March 27 is fast approaching and only then will we see who is really on the ball! Reigning Ulster MX1 champion Wayne Garrett enjoyed riding in SoCal during the worst of the Irish winter. The TSR KTM team leader is determined to win the Ulster championship trophy for the fourth time. With double Irish

champ Stuart Edmonds living in England to concentrate on the Maxxis and Red Bull series, just who is going to step up to the plate and challenge Wayne this season?

Suspect #1 is Richard Bird, the reigning MX2 champ just recently returned from GC's training camp in Spain where he enjoyed two weeks riding and training every day. Richard is both fast and consistent aboard his Watt Motorcycles/GOMX Distribution KTM.

Another Watt KTM-mounted challenger is Ballygowan racer Gary Gibson who has won races in the past. If he can become stronger on his off days Gary could be in the hunt come the end of the season.

Tommy Merton may not be a youngster anymore but I can assure you of this, Tommy will be there or thereabouts – a fresh challenge riding a Watt Motorcycles Kawasaki and mentoring young Ian Marshal has rekindled Tommy's desire to win.

I guess the dark horse and possibly the spoiler of the show could be Robert Hamilton. Joining the G&G racing stable and getting back on Yamaha machinery may restore Hammy's confidence and if that happens we will have another title contender! Team owner Graham Ross knows the game inside and out – he will give Hammy the tools to do the job and help rebuild that once lightning-fast corner speed that captured an Ulster title for Hammy in 2005.

Team AJ Elite Bathroom riders Jason Garrett and Davy Gorman are always a threat, especially on hardpack tracks and by the looks of the 2010 fixture list we could see the AJ boys at the sharp end of the pack most weekends.

A mouth-watering thought – I wonder just how many of the Ulster championship rounds GC will manage to fit in. Gordon is aiming to grow his MX training business and what better way of signing students at home than winning at home?

See you at the races...

Stevie
dirtbikerider

1ST RACE VICTORY

KTM starts 2010 with a bang!

Tony Cairoli showed what he and the new 350 SX-F are made of at the Starcross in Mantova with 2 race wins and the overall MX1 victory.

Shaun Simpson and Marvin Musquin wrapped up a near perfect weekend on their 250 SX-F's with a 1-2 in MX2. From the first holeshot – "Ready to Race"



www.ktm.co.uk

Photo: M. Jahn





SEXED UP!

THE WINTER OLYMPICS HAS SHAKEN UP ITS FORMAT TO ATTRACT A NEW, YOUNGER AUDIENCE – SO WHY CAN'T ENDURO DO THE SAME?

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

The Winter Olympics isn't an event that I normally take much notice of. I don't ski and for much of February I only had to look out of my living room window to see snow so for the most part you'll have to excuse me for not getting overly excited about 'The Games'. But on the odd occasion I did sit in front of the box to see what was happening in Canada there were a few disciplines that caught my eye. Cross-country skiing, hurling and speed skating did little to float my boat but boardercross, ski cross and downhill? Now that was a different story altogether.

Ski cross, arguably the most talked about discipline at the games, is for any of you that didn't see it the ski equivalent of downhill mountain bike four-cross. Described by some as being a little like motocross, Nascar and bull riding, winter sports traditionalists hated the fact that an 'extreme' event had made it into the Olympics.

But check out a few of the comments posted on the BBC website regarding the new event... 'Ski cross is the first skiing sport I've enjoyed in the Winter Olympics'... 'Awesome event, I have been looking forward to it since I heard it was being added to the Olympic schedule'... 'Power, skill, excitement and drama'... 'A brilliant, welcome addition to the Winter Olympics'... And so it goes on.

Granted, most of the comments came from the BBC's younger audience and there were a few that 'didn't see the point' but on the whole the introduction of an action-packed, simple-to-understand, all-out 'it ain't over till they cross the finish line' discipline was clearly well received. Hats off to the Winter Olympics for

allowing ski cross into the games.

What relevance does all this have to enduro? Well, enduro can – in a not overly obvious way – be likened to the Olympics and the ISDE is after all thought of by many as being the Olympics of motorcycling. Both the games and enduro sport have been around for a long, long time and both are steeped in history. Okay, so they're actually not that similar but stick with me.

What the Winter Olympics has shown by introducing high-drama events like ski cross and boardercross into its programme is that it is not afraid of change, of mixing long-standing 'traditional' events with new and exciting disciplines. And above all it's not afraid to move things forward.

Trying to move things forward is exactly what the British Enduro Sprint Championship hopes to do to the British enduro scene. Recognising that in order to make enduro sport more appealing to younger riders it needs to be a more dynamic, exciting, shorter, sharper discipline, the BESC has taken a long hard look at the sport of enduro and come up with what it believe is a more rider, spectator and media-friendly discipline.

Gone is the need for a road legal bike, working lights and 'weird' tyres. Gone too is the need to for a ton of specialist knowledge, the understanding of how time cards work and the need for a rider to change his own tyres. In fact most of what 'enduro outsiders' don't understand has been stripped away.

Removing from a 'traditional' enduro just about everything apart from the special test – that's the exciting bit where riders push themselves to their limits – the BESC hopes in many ways to do to enduro what ski cross has

done to the Winter Olympics – add a little excitement and make the sport relevant and appealing to a new and younger audience.

The reason the Winter Olympics has introduced sports like boardercross and ski cross is because they are significant to what today's young skiers are doing on the slopes and want to watch on TV. Catering for the youth of today ensures the success of the games of tomorrow.

Enduro has long been seen as an 'old man's sport' and at times not without good reason. With the WEC having been given a thorough going over in recent years in order to make it not only more professional but also more entertaining, the image of enduro has changed a lot – and changed for the better. But people outside of the sport often still don't get it.

Keeping things simple is what the BESC hopes will attract new riders. Majoring on easy to understand competition will also hopefully excite those already hooked on enduro sport. It won't be to everyone's liking just as ski cross isn't at the Winter Olympics but the idea behind the new discipline isn't to one day stamp out traditional, long course enduros. It's to bring something new to the table which will hopefully inject some new life into the sport and maybe, just maybe, strengthen it and help it grow.

What the British Enduro Sprint Championship hopes is that riders will give the new series a go. Not just the best of the best and those already racing in enduro events – many of the UK's top enduro riders including Knighter have already signed up for the series – but those that might have stayed away from enduro because of its perceived complexities. Why not give it a go – www.enduro-sprint.com

You can catch Taddy – plus Knighter and some other big names – in action at the opening round of the BESC



MONSTER
ENERGY

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MONSTER HUNT!

WE'RE ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR A NEW **MONSTER ENERGY** GRID GIRL — AND WE WANT YOU TO HELP FIND HER FOR US...

Welcome to month two of our quest to find a Monster Energy grid girl to represent DBR at the British MXGP and in an exclusive Monster girl photoshoot!

Monster Girls are wild, boisterous, exciting, rebellious and scandalous. Monster Girls are not just a pretty face but an attitude, changing their fashion, hair, make-up, speech and whole lifestyle to live the Monster brand to its fullest. They dance, they drink, they party till dawn, they can't be held back or controlled, Monster girls are admired, adored and not to be messed with. In short, Monster Girls rock our socks off!

The deal's dead simple. Monster Energy want DBR readers to find a luscious lady to work for them at the **British MXGP** at Chepstow on **May 30** and feature in a professional photoshoot.

So how about it? Do you know someone who fits the bill? Is your other half a honey? Your sister scorchio? Maybe you have a drop-dead gorgeous gal-pal? Does the lady in the block of flats opposite look a beauty through binoculars? Or if you're one of our foxy female readers — such as the thoroughly marvellous **Millie** pictured right who was one of the first to enter — you could even fit the bill yourself...

The competition kicked off in last month's DBR and signs off in next month's mag so you've still got plenty of time to pop your piccies in the post, email them to us or fire them across via text.

To submit your entry you can either email pics to us at anthony.sutton@dirtbikerider.co.uk or by post to **'Monster Hunt', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe LA4 4AG**. If you're in a hurry you can even text a pic across to **07786 200546** — just write DBRMG in the text box followed by your name and where you live*. Entries must have the permission of the lady in question plus her name, address and her daytime contact number. Please note, all candidates must be 18 or over...

Entries close on **April 30**.

*All replied messages cost £1 plus standard network charge. By supplying your telephone number you're happy to receive SMS/MMS messages from Johnston Press and its approved business partners. Johnston Press (or via its agents) and its business partners may contact you about new promotions, products and services. Please add the word STOP at the end of your message if you do not wish to receive these. For quality and training purposes we may monitor communications. SMS/MMS service is provided by g8wave London N7.





01 SDG USA BUMP AND SEAT COVER KIT

Bumps have been all the rage with pregnant ladies for the last 200,000 years or so and in recent years motocross riders have been getting in on the act too. Rather than carrying it all up front MXers prefer their bumps to be on the seats of their bikes as when correctly placed they're pretty potent at keeping your sweet cheeks in place under hard acceleration and stuff. SDG USA have been champions of the dirt bike bump from the beginning so it's no surprise that they're now offering this sweet bump and seat cover set for pretty much all dirt scooters.

Price: £56.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 01282 473190

02 FOX RACING LTD EDITION VORTEX RACEWEAR

Just two months into 2010 and Fox Racing are already spoiling us with updated designs and colour options like this limited edition 360 Vortex kit in a colour of green that'll make you scream – scream with excitement!

Price: Jersey £39.99 Pants £135.99 V3 helmet £229.99
Supplier: foxeurope.com
Contact: 0191 487 6100

03 NITRO CIRCUS T-SHIRT RANGE

By popping down to your local Madison-stocked dirt bike dealer right now and splurging 20 pounds – less a penny – per item you can look like you are part of the Nitro Circus crew without taking any of the risks. That's what's known in the trade as a double bonus – you should get some while the going is good...

Price: £19.99
Supplier: madison.co.uk
Contact: 0870 034 7226

04 THOR RACING FLUX SEEK AND DESTROY KIT

There's no denying that 'The Potatoman' Ryan Villopoto is hauling some serious butt right now in the AMA SX series this year and as Marge pointed out last week "ooh doesn't he look smart in that paint splodge THOR gear?". Personally, I reckon our Art Ed is pretty much right because the Seek and Destroy kit the multi-time Lites MX and SX champ is rocking is rocking. It's also available in the UK right now in limited numbers – so check out your local THOR emporium today!

Price: Jersey £49.99 Pants £149.99 Gloves £29.99
Supplier: madison.co.uk
Contact: 0870 034 7226

05 RFX HARDWEAR BOX STAND

With its full rubber top and clever cut-away design that makes changing your machine's oil possible while your bike is sat on it, this range of rather nifty looking stands from Race FX might just be the solution to all your dirt bike parking problems.

Price: £44.95
Supplier: racefx.co.uk
Contact: 0845 450 1448

06 PRO ACTION MIXTURE SCREW

This Pro Action gold anodized, hex-shaped, aluminium mixture screw makes adjusting your carbashooter's mixture a doddle, it looks trick and is available for all none-EFI Japanese-built four-poppers. You want one don't you...

Price: £14.99
Supplier: pro-action.com
Contact: 01977 672400

07 APICO**HONDA PERFORMANCE PARTS**

The more elderly motocross pilots among us will remember back in the day when Apico used to manufacture the most bitchin' racewear available on this planet. Sadly since the early '90s Vesty and the gang have stopped creating soft goods and are now concentrating on creating hard parts instead. And that's not a bad thing because you can now pimp your ride with some sweet priced bits and bobs like these from Burnley's #1 dirt bike bits distributor.

Price: Chain Roller £6.99 Axle blocks £21.50

Oil plug £10.50 Security bolt caps £6.99

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190

08 FLY RACING**WOMEN'S KINETIC KIT**

Styled and cut for motocross riders of the no-tail variety Fly Racing's women's Kinetic kit is just the thing for aspiring female throttle jockeys who don't want to slip into racewear built for blokes! Check out www.flyracing.com for the full lowdown.

Price: Pants £84.95 Jersey £27.95 Pants £23.95

Supplier: racefx.co.uk

Contact: 0845 450 1448

09 ONE INDUSTRIES**HART AND HUNTINGTON RACEWEAR**

As an FMX innovator and a guy with a good eye for design – and the ladies – it's not surprising that the City of Las Vegas' #1 hell raiser Carey Hart has been invited by the equally innovative casual clothing, helmet, graphics and racewear company One Industries to help create a signature line of riding kit. Using their outstanding Defcon and Carbon racewear ranges as a blank canvas Hart has created these awesome tattoo-inspired masterpieces that are available now right here in the UK!

Price: Defcon pants £129.99 Defcon jersey £39.99

Carbon pants £24.99 Carbon jersey £69.99 Gloves £27.99

Supplier: oneindustrieseurope.com

Contact: 01404 549696

10 BOLT**CHAIN ADJUSTERS**

Chain adjusters are reet boring right? Well remind yourself of that fact when your well-rounded ones are seized solid in your swing-arm and you need to adjust yer o-ring in a hurry. For the price of a pint and a packet of nuts (that's northern prices right there) you can replace your adjusters with these from Bolt and if you remember to lube 'em up properly too you'll enjoy many happy years together. Awww.

Price: £3.50

Supplier: apico.co.uk

Contact: 01282 473190

11 WEST COAST RACING**CASUAL CLOTHING**

If you're looking for bargain-priced MX-inspired casual clothing then you could do a lot worse than visit West Coast Racing's home on the world wide web – www.west-coast-racing.co.uk

Price: Tee £9.99 Hat £10

Supplier: west-coast-racing.co.uk

Contact: 07843 498142

12 OBG MX**RACEWEAR**

If you're looking for stylish well-built racewear that – in this country at least – is rarer than a fart free day in the DBR office then check out this OBG racewear from Germany at www.obg.fm – the whole site's in German but you can get a good idea of what the brand's all about and see all the pretty colours and that...

Price: TBC

Supplier: obg.fm

Contact: 0049 6104 945 970



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PAGES





Ryan Hughes practices what he preaches in his fully kitted-out gym

When it comes to teaching MX skills Ryno's super-passionate – but he demands passion back from his pupils in return



RYNO MIGHT!

ON THE TRACK AMA LEGEND RYAN 'RYNO' HUGHES WAS FAMED FOR HIS TOUGH AND UNCOMPROMISING ATTITUDE, OFF THE TRACK HE'S JUST AS TOUGH WHEN IT COMES TO TRAINING – AND HIS APPROACH IS AS UNCONVENTIONAL AS IT IS UNCOMPROMISING. WE SPEND A FEW DAYS AT RYNOLAND AND FIND OUT THE HARD WAY...

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY JP O'CONNELL

If you ride a dirt bike of any sort then it's a fairly safe bet that you want to ride it to the best of your ability. And it's probably also fairly safe to say that without a little help this ain't going to happen. Look at any top athlete – behind them there's almost certainly a top trainer. And if a pro feels the need for a trainer then it goes without saying that the likes of you and me would also benefit from the expertise of someone who knows what they're talking about.

Since retiring from pro riding two years ago AMA legend Ryan Hughes hasn't sat idle and now works full-time training upcoming and seasoned pros as well as youths and amateurs in a programme covering everything from riding technique and physical training through to nutrition and mental well being. The list of riders who have sought his help is impressive and includes Jason Lawrence, Josh Hill, Josh Grant, Brett Metcalfe, Ricky Dietrich, Robbie Maddison and Nate Adams. >>



Before putting his pupils through their paces Ryno demonstrates the techniques he's teaching



A call to Ryan to discuss his training methods resulted in an offer to come out to his California training facility for a week and see for myself – back of the net! But before I could train with Ryno there was the trifling matter of an 11-hour flight followed by the nightmare of trying to navigate my way out of Los Angeles. In the dark. With a dodgy sat-nav. In a car with the steering wheel on the wrong side!

As it happens the trip wasn't too bad and other than being buzzed by a chapter of the Devil's Disciples and making a couple of wrong turns I arrived at Ryan's place a mere 21 hours after I left home. After being introduced to the resident pro riders – five-time WMA champ Jessica Patterson, Moto Concept Yamaha's Vince Friese and East Coast Lites rider Jimmy Decotis – as well as amateurs Miles Ward and Amanda Maheu it was time to hit the hay.

The facility itself is pretty awesome with a garage big enough for about 10 bikes, a state of the art gym and living quarters for 10 people all

situated next to Ryan's house. His riding facility – Rynoland – is a 25-minute drive away. Set at 4500 feet above sea level, it's a 500-acre site that includes one SX track, three outdoor tracks and two four-mile off-road loops.

Monday morning we load up and head off to the SX practice track where Vince, Jessica and Jimmy put in some warm-up laps before Ryan has them working sprints, then practising starts. The session finishes with a 20-minute moto at full speed. As this is my first day I get to sit back and watch but once the riding session is over it's back to Ryno's for physical training.

As Ryan's giving me a lift back I take the opportunity to ask him how he made the transition from rider to trainer.

"Everybody knows that I have always trained hard and during the last three years of my riding career I changed up my own training regime," he tells me. "In turn the last two years that I rode the WORCS series I was also training Brett Metcalfe and Josh Grant. I knew that when I finished

FIRST-HAND VIEW

VINCE FRIESE >>>

"I've been to a ton of different trainers and schools in the past and I think Ryno's is the only one that has the whole package, the only one who can teach you everything you need to know," reckons the Moto Concept Yamaha rider. "He's been there and done everything that I've been through and I'm gonna go through."

"He can tell me what to do in virtually every area of my training, racing and living. A really solid programme – no-one else has a package that can compare. If you're serious about doing good then this is definitely the place to come, he can teach you everything you need to know about becoming successful in motocross. I've been on a bike for 16 years and I've made the biggest improvements in the last 12 months. I think that speaks for itself."

AMANDA MAHEU >>>

"There's lots of competition in the house between the kids – then Ryan will push us even more, he helps you along," says 14-year-old Amanda Maheu. "My style has changed a lot and it's helped pick up some speed that was being held back by the way I used to ride. It's not huge differences, just little things that when you add them up have made a big difference. Ryan is a great trainer, tough but fair."

Moto Concept Yamaha's Vince Friese is training at Rynoland



riding I could just flow into that job as I had so much interest and experience in training. After I quit riding I realised that I didn't have as much understanding as I thought – I still don't have that much understanding as there's so much to learn and everyone is different. If you think you're done learning then you're cheating yourself and your clients.

"I learn from a guy called Paul Chek from the CHEK Institute. He's a rehabilitator by trade and teaches nutrition, training [physical not MX], stretching, mindset – the list is endless. The dude's a master! His courses are more for general health and not pinpointed at MX but his training, philosophy and ideas work for everything. There is a lot more for me to learn and that's exciting, I strive to be at the forefront of new ideas and training techniques. I know that no other MX trainer is trying to make themselves better."

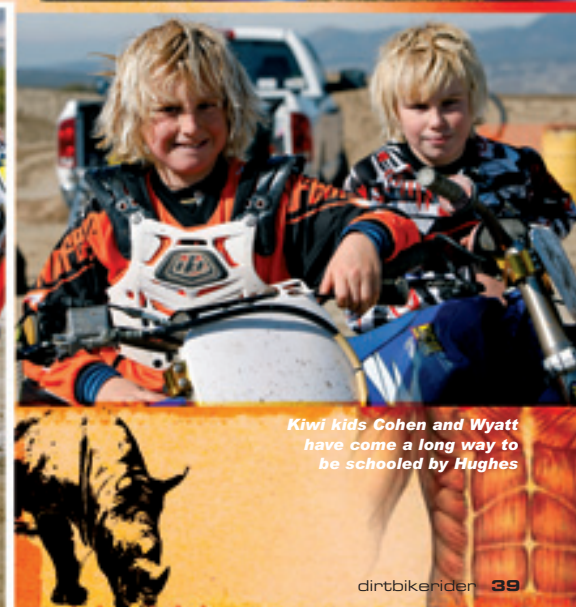
When we get back to the house we're joined by some more riders who'll be taking part in the training session but I'm told to sit it out and await my own session later as this will be a little too much! Now I'm quite fit and at first thought that I would be okay to join in – 10 minutes later I was glad to be sat watching. The training is different from anything else I've seen motocrossers employ. It's a 30-minute high-intensity workout

using medicine balls, Swiss balls and body weight focusing on balance, co-ordination, strength, endurance and flexibility.

At the end of the session the riders are pretty much flaked out – but not so the Ryno! It's straight off to the gym with me where I quickly start to realise that the training I tend to focus on at home – CV work such as running, cycling etc – is probably not as effective as I thought. One of the first tasks is to simply balance on your knees on a Swiss ball while we throw a weighted ball between us. I say simply but this quickly manages to demonstrate how completely shot my balance and co-ordination are and how poor my core strength is! Undeterred, I carry on and as well as working on breathing techniques there are several exercises that utilise my bodyweight to build on my non-existent core muscles.

"My training is completely different – no two-hour bike rides, no 20-mile runs. To be creative and understanding is to think outside of the box, it's not being different just to be different but to find new ways and techniques. I've figured out an easier way to train – I mean, don't get me wrong, it's hard but at the same time it's easier. You don't spend so much time doing it plus it's functional movement, everything we do is the way the body has been designed to move, to get strong, to be stable."

"It resembles racing a motorcycle as that requires balance, co-ordination, strength, speed, intensity, efficiency, concentration and cardio. All these things are covered in one workout as that's what MX is asking of you. My training develops fast twitch muscles, speeds up your nervous system – a bicycle and running can slow these things down. Cycling, swimming and running won't help you when you crash and you're going to! I train you to go fast but also to make it safer when you hit the ground as you'll be more flexible, pliable and strong." >>>



Kiwi kids Cohen and Wyatt have come a long way to be schooled by Hughes

Class of 2010

TOMMY SEARLE

Gordon Crookard

Billy Mackenzie

Wayne Smith

Kristian Whatley

Craig Chamberlain

Geoff Walker

Jordon Rose

Lee Dunham

Luke Rimmer

Robbie Herring

GARY GIBSON

Ross Clarke

TOMMY MERTON

Danny Tollet

Tony Craig

Daniel Irvine

Sam Smith

Robert Crawford

Davey Dirt

MICHAEL MAHAN

Ben Howells

Jason Rennie

Martin Jones

Robert Reece

Stephen Tillotson

Ian Marshall

MIKEY BURFIELD

Rich Thomas (mtb)

DEAN THOMPSON (quad)

TYLER SOAR (quad)

Matt Banahan



It's easy to see his point when at the end of a 30-minute session I'm blowing out of my arse. I certainly don't feel the need to get on a bike or pull on a pair of Green Flash for a 40-minute run. In fact, with the jetlag kicking in I'm about ready to eat and hit the sack!

Tuesday dawns with clear blue skies – as do most mornings in Southern California – and I'm pretty excited as we're heading off to Rynoland to ride one of the outdoor tracks. I'm lucky that Ryan is lending me a bike for my trip but it's worth remembering that you will either need to hire a bike for your stay or, if you are on a longer trip, buy a bike over here and sell it when you leave. As it's SX season Jimmy, Vince and Jess head over to the SX track while we meet up with Amanda Maheu (14 and very, very fast) and her dad, NZ boys Cohen (12) and Wyatt (10) and their parents Steve and Angela – who've brought the whole family over for three weeks in order for the boys to be trained – plus the British contingent of Jordan Booker and MotoXtreme Kawasaki's Lewis Gregory.

Now it's worth noting that my MX skills are suspect – after all, the whole point of this trip is to improve – but when I first see the track I

nearly soil myself! The jumps are massive and my nerves certainly aren't calmed when my loan bike is unloaded. Upon inspection it turns out to be the 450 Honda that Vince campaigned the outdoor Nationals on last year. Just a little pokier than my CRF250X then! Top bloke Albert Steward from Madison has sorted me out some trick Thor gear for the trip so at least I'll look good when I'm wheeled into ER.

But once I put in a few wobbly laps and get more used to the phenomenal power and brakes I start to enjoy myself and before long we are called to the line to practice our starts. Ryan spends time with each of us, physically moving his students into the correct position before counting us down and watching as we career down the start straight. Once he's happy that we're doing okay he picks a tricky section of the track – a waved sand corner – and demonstrates several times what position we should be in and how we should be riding it before we get the chance to try it. Once we've been through it a couple of times he spends a bit of time with each of us, explaining what we could do to improve and, more importantly, how and why it will improve us.

Ryan pulls no punches when I ask what I'm doing wrong. "Where shall we start? How about with the toes and finish with your head? Seriously, it's all about body position, you need to be working with the bike not fighting against it. Start by thinking of your feet position – you should have the balls of your feet on the pegs, toes if you can and grip with your ankles. Unlock your hips and push your ass out and try to look further ahead. In a week you probably won't notice a difference in speed – what I will give you is the proper technique and with technique will come the speed."

His enthusiasm is infectious and I end up wanting to get it right as much for him as for myself. When he's satisfied that everyone's making progress it's time for us to do some sprints, followed by a 20-minute moto before we load up and head back to the gym for a session of stretching.

"People's bodies are full of imbalances, rounded shoulders, rounded back, tight hips, core imbalances, lower abs not functioning due to faulty nutrition, forward head posture," Ryno explains. "And this all comes from a faulty lifestyle and faulty training. If you want to be the best motocross rider then you need to work on these things. I can't say I'm the fastest I've ever been in my life but I can say I ride the motorcycle better than I've ever ridden it, I feel more in control than ever before. The way I see it I have 26 years of Harvard experience of racing motorcycles – I want to give back to the sport by teaching people the right way to ride the bike and that will also make them safer."

As well as the MX training and the physical training Ryan is also keen that his students understand nutrition and eat the right foods when they are training with him. A big no-no at the Hughes' house is gluten which can affect digestion and therefore affect your lower abs and the performance of the lower extremities. This means that the shared kitchen is filled with boxes and bags of gluten free food plus every kind of organic vegetable you can imagine.

Hydration should also play a big part in any motocross rider's diet. "Your body is 75 per cent water, not f**king 75 per cent Gatorade, Coke, tea or energy drinks. Just water. It keeps you focused. Honestly, it's not rocket science – drink water and eat food that comes out of the ground!" At this point I consider it wise not to tell him that my meals so far have consisted >>



Jessica Patterson is a five-time WMA champ

FIRST-HAND VIEW

JESSICA PATTERSON >>

"We were both being sponsored by Honda of Houston and they offered for me to come out here and be trained by him if I wanted," says the five-time WMA champ. "I knew that he was a bad dude, that he used to train real hard and he has a real good work ethic and I just needed to take that step."

"This is a lot different to what I was doing, I used to go out on my bicycle and go to the gym a lot but it's a whole different game when you come here. You learn so many different exercises and do so many other things but you also work out less, I mean I used to be in the gym every day and Ryan said that I was over-training."

"Here we work out three days and I definitely feel I get more out of that, the whole deal here is a lot more personalised. I mean some trainers will just do a little gym work with you and then stand on the track with a timer, here you get everything."

MILES WARD >>

"Back home there aren't really any places that offer what Ryan offers and because of his track record and results I thought why not give it a try," says the Aussie amateur. "I was looking for first-hand experience and that's what he offers."

"There are several schools out there but if I'm going to do it I might as well go all-out and get the best. Ryan is intense but he's not scary, he really cares that you do the right thing – I mean he understands that this is a big investment and he cares you get results. He's passionate that you try hard because he's trying hard out there too."



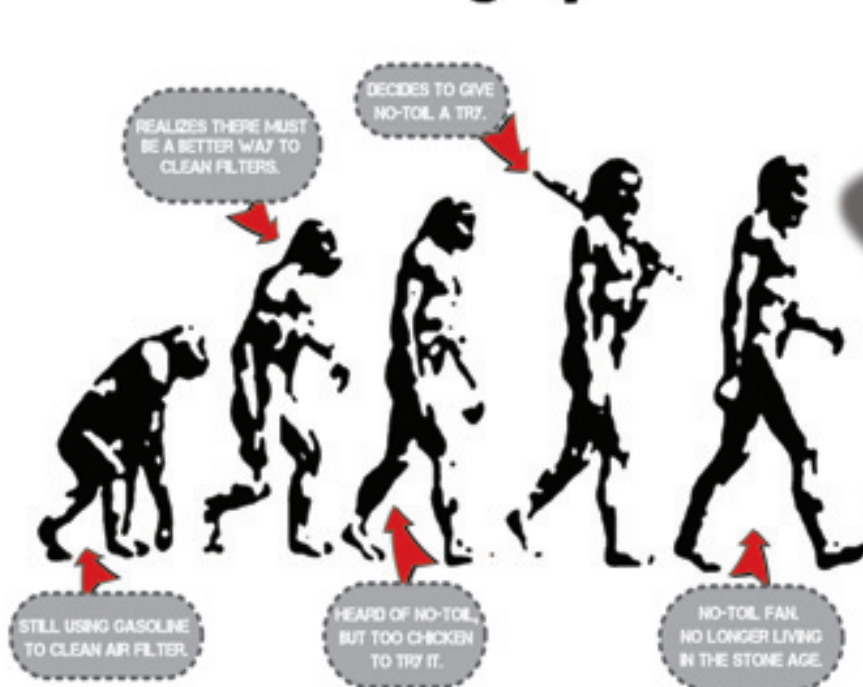
Aussie Miles Ward



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BRITS ABROAD

JORDAN AND LEWIS >>

When you're 1000s of miles from home it's always nice to find something familiar and in this case it's English riders Jordan Booker and Lewis Gregory who are out in California getting prepared for the forthcoming season.

"Jordan and I had come out to SoCal on New Year's Day and bought bikes the first week we were here," explains Lewis. "We were getting some work done on them by Ryan's old mechanic, got talking and thought we'd come out to his place and see if we could learn some things from him while we were here."

"I'd done a little bit of training with Dave Watson when I was younger, then little bits here and there but nothing consistent. This has been really good and I've learnt a lot in the couple of weeks that we've been here. I mean, I'm getting on a bit now but I've learnt a lot as regards training and riding, just little things that can make a big difference and will hopefully help me out this year."

"There have been a few things that have been a bit of an eye-opener as regards training. We do a lot of work with the Swiss ball, working on the core. I'd done that before but not as much as we should do. There's also been a couple of things with the riding as well – I don't want to go into too much detail though!"

"I would definitely recommend this to anyone. Ryan's got the gym that's got everything in it, the experience, plus 100s of acres to ride on. There's always something new every day – it doesn't get repetitive."

Brits abroad – Lewis Gregory and Jordan Booker



Ryno takes the strain for a Fox photoshoot



East Coast Lites rider Jimmy Decotis

FIRST-HAND VIEW

JIMMY DECOTIS >>

"I came out here for a couple of days, Ryan showed me the programme and I immediately knew that this was what I needed to propel me to the next level," admits the East Coast Lites SX rider. "I've been here a little while and I can honestly say that if I hadn't come here I would never have progressed as much as I have now."

"My previous training consisted of long runs and a couple of hours in the gym but it's over-training – you need to be doing the right training, the smart training."

"You can't just come here and listen to what Ryno says and expect to get everything out of it, you need to learn it and feel it, that's what I've been doing and it's made a huge difference to me."

"The food, the training, the riding, everything compacted together it's like a whole different ball game, everything is right. If everybody in the sport was doing this then the sport would excel – you'd see less injuries, faster riders, safer tracks. It would just be a whole better programme."

of a McDonald's and a pizza big enough for four!

The following day everyone heads out to the track to practice for a couple of hours before getting back to the house where there is a bit of a beastie lying in wait. Fox Racing are launching a line of gym wear and Ryan has been chosen as the face of the line. The Fox photographers are here to shoot for the catalogue so everyone gets put through their paces in a garden workout that can only be described as excruciating! Again, the session lasts about 30 minutes with motocross specific exercises and come the end you feel as if you've run a marathon with all muscles getting a thorough workout.

Thursday sees a return to Rynoland but on a new outdoor track, one that I prefer to the first as the jumps are slightly smaller although the elevation changes are still pretty large. After warm up we practice a downhill S section through deep sand where the name of the game is to be up on the pegs looking far forward. Once again Ryan demonstrates several times, observes, discusses where we are going wrong and shows us how to get it right before we head off to a double 180 working on different lines. As is the norm the session finishes with some sprint laps followed by a 20-minute moto before getting

back to the gym for a session of stretching.

It's a bit of a sad moment for me as it's the last time I'll ride out here. The tracks at Rynoland are fantastic, natural and great fun – a bit of a motocross heaven really. I have definitely gotten faster by the end of the week and with the list of things Ryno has given me to work on hopefully I'll be able to keep it up back home – then again that would involve going out in the cold, getting covered in crap and spending longer washing the bike than riding it so maybe that's a bit of wishful thinking on my part!

Friday is a morning spent in the gym with a whole heap of new exercises to keep us entertained. I really am a big fan of this type of training – you come out feeling invigorated with pretty much every muscle in your body singing out. It's been identified that I hunch my shoulders forward due to a long standing neck problem which in turn causes my spine to be slightly less supple than a scaffold pole so Ryan has come up with a series of exercises and stretches which seem to be doing the trick and should also help posture and form on the bike.

Once the gym session is over that's me done for the week and I have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed myself. It's been an eye-opening few days – the riding was fantastic, the groomed and

watered tracks were awesome and I have been given the tools to improve both my speed and technique as well as coming away with a completely new outlook on training and the importance of stretching and eating properly.

There's no getting away from the fact that Southern California is a long way away and that it will cost you a fair amount of money but if you are serious about improving yourself both on and off the bike then this is the place to come. Add in the fact that you are probably never further than 10-15 miles from a sh*t hot track and the sun is nearly always shining it becomes all the more tempting!

If you decide on coming to Ryan's then you know you are getting experience, passion and are learning functional technique. "I ride three times a week and I train with the guys," says Ryan. "I practice what I preach. If I tell you how to eat then that's how I'm eating, how to stretch then I'm stretching more, if I tell you to train then I'm training harder. I'm not trying to blow my own trumpet but there's nothing that comes out of my mouth that isn't a part of me."

If you are interested in finding out more information on Ryno's training school then visit www.ryanhughesmx.com to see if there's something that suits you.

TABLETOPPER!

OUR IRISH ACE TEACHES YOU HOW TO HANDLE TABLETOP JUMPS...

WORDS BY **GORDON CROCKARD** PHOTOS BY **SUTTY**

With three British Open titles and four GP wins to his name, Gordon Crockard is a bona fide motocross legend – and now he’s sharing his riding secrets with DBR readers. Every month the Crock Star will run through an essential technique for everyone’s racing repertoire – kicking off this issue with three separate techniques for tackling traditional tabletops. And when you’ve read and digested his first lesson hook up to www.dirtbikerider.com for a video demo from GC...



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"This is a traditional tabletop jump of average size. The approach to it is a third gear straight on flat ground. There are three levels of technique for this jump which I'll run through one by one..."

"The most basic technique for riders of an average ability is to accelerate to the jump take-off, close the throttle and freewheel momentarily, then accelerate on the upslope of the take-off. You must be standing on the pegs in a central, neutral position. This technique is the most time consuming method but the safest way to clear the tabletop and reach the landing downslope.

"The next step of progression is to accelerate further to the face of the jump take-off and then knock the throttle off and freewheel off the take-off ramp. The bike will naturally take off front wheel lower than with technique one. You must compensate for this with your body position and transfer your weight to the rear of the bike once your wheels have left the ground. You will be faster with this method as you have been able to hold the

throttle open longer on the approach to the jump. Again, use the standing position on take-off as used with technique one.

"The ultimate time saving technique is to attack this jump as I am demonstrating in the photo sequence. Accelerate much further into the face of the jump take-off than with techniques one and two. Then on the face of the ramp you stand hard on the rear brake pedal and kill all of the excess speed you are carrying. If you fail to brake enough you will overjump the landing ramp and risk injury or time loss. Use of the front brake is not advisable as it has a negative effect on the performance of the front forks and throws the weight of the bike onto the front end making a controlled take-off unpredictable.

"Be aware there is a risk of the engine locking up and stalling if you hold the rear brake pedal on too long and the rear wheel leaves the top of the take-off ramp while still under braking so you must release the brake before the rear wheel leaves the ground. Your body position must

be further to the rear of the bike to prevent a nosedive low flight once airborne.

"As you come back down to land get ready to accelerate hard to the next section of track. Move your bodyweight to the front of the bike so you can accelerate hard on the throttle once you land and not risk looping out off the back. This technique is for advanced riding and you should progress to this stage with caution and respect of what the dangers are. The main risk is stalling, nosediving, underjumping or overjumping. Underjump or overjump is determined by your judgment and accuracy on timing. I would advise building up to using this technique.

"The time is saved by being able to hold the throttle on right into the face of the jump but to kill the excess speed and avoid a huge overjump you must brake hard on the rear."

For video footage of Gordy's tabletop techniques go to www.dirtbikerider.com



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TEAM NAILS

NAILS R-US



Give or take an injury or two the 16-year-old Brit has enjoyed stellar rookie seasons indoors and out in the US

MAX ATTACKS!

IN ONLY HIS ROOKIE INDOOR SEASON MAX ANSTIE'S ALREADY PROVING TO BE A SERIOUS THREAT TO TAKE AN AMA SX PODIUM – WHEN HE CAN KEEP IT RUBBERSIDE DOWN! WE CAUGHT UP WITH THE 16-YEAR-OLD BRIT WHO'S LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM...

Words and photos by JP O'Connell

“Have we got enough or is there anything else we can get while we're here?” asks a grinning Max Anstie as he pulls off after throwing out another huge whip over the Yamaha test track triple. While I'm over in California with Ryno Hughes I've been lucky enough to be invited to spend the day with the Ansties – that's Max, his dad Mervyn and stepmum Devin – snapping Anstie Jnr as he puts in laps at the SX track before we head out to his training facility a few miles away in Hemet.

It's an English tradition to adopt successful 'foreign' sportsmen as our own. Well, in 16-year-old Max we have a bona fide Englishman who's taking it to the Yanks in their own backyard.

As a third birthday present, Max's GP-winning dad bought his son a PW50 to bomb about on. But the seed had already been sown before this. “I used to watch my dad race,” explains Max, “so the bug has been there from a very early age. I was racing since I was very young, riding 50s then 60s at places like Farleigh Castle, The

Battle of Bushton and in the KWS series. When I was around nine or 10 I started to campaign the Dutch championships on a 65, all the way through to BW85s against people like Jeffrey Herlings who's now coming along in the GPs.”

The sand in Holland is like nowhere else in the world and Merv knew that for Max to progress to his full potential that was where he needed to be racing. So while still living in the UK they would pack up the truck and head off on a Friday, returning Sunday evening in time for Max to be back at school on the Monday morning.

“It's an art to be able to ride that sand,” remembers Max. “It took me four years to be able to get it down. All the while I was racing Jeffrey and it was good for both of us, pushing both him and me along. There are not many people who can say that they can ride places like Lommel or Lierop really well and actually enjoy it – there's a special way to ride it and it's not what you think it is, one mistake can cost you five seconds in a lap. That's what I learned in Holland and I like to think that one day I will get to go back and race maybe a

GP or the des Nations there.”

All of the hard work and determination paid off when in 2007 Max landed the Dutch 85cc BW title to add to his '06 and '07 85cc Bercy SX championships. As well as racing the Dutch national series Max contested the European championships which ran alongside the MX3 championship. “It was like racing the GPs themselves. I took all of the information that I learned there and brought it over to the US with me.”

It had always been part of Merv's plan for his son to race in America and the opportunity arose when his former GP adversary Kurt Nicoll, boss of KTM North America at the time, gave them the chance to come over to the US and ride the '08 amateur series.

“No-one would put that offer down and that decision has got me to where I am now, otherwise I'd be racing GPs. The day after I won my '07 Bercy title we moved to America to begin racing the amateur series with KTM. I was still contracted to Kawasaki until December 31 but luckily my agents Jamie Dobb and Jimmy Button got it sorted for me.” >>



If his racing career doesn't take off there's always Maccy Dsl



Max's dad Merv is a big influence on his career



After learning his craft in the Dutch sand, riding the US circuit was almost like starting from scratch for the young Anstie and he needed time to acclimatise. "Everything is so different – the races, how fast everything is, how you can ride every day, what the weather is like. What you can accomplish in one day is far more than you can in Europe. You can be up training at 5am and it's not freezing, you can ride SX or MX all day if you want, it's sunny and you don't have to wash your bike every day!"

Halfway through '08 Max started riding a 125cc as well as racing the 85cc and he soon began to produce championships on both the 85cc and 125cc bikes. It was then just a small step up to a full-on 250 four-stroke.

"I started riding the 250F early in '09 and was soon pretty fast and running the pace. The day after my 16th birthday [April 25] was the world four-stroke championship at Glen Helen where I lined up between Tommy Searle and Austin Stroupe. How cool was that! Tommy had just finished second in the world! I ended up finishing second to Stroupe in both motos beating guys like Searle, Blake Wharton and all the Yamaha guys."

With an AMA rule change regarding

age restrictions about to come into force some serious – and speedy – decisions had to be made. The long and short of it was that if they hesitated Max would find himself ineligible to race SX until 2012. It was a no-brainer. "I was like 'let's go race pro! Physically I probably wasn't ready – I mean I was still a kid – but I knew I had the speed.'"

A week before the season opener at Glen Helen it was announced that Max had been granted a pro licence and would be racing for J-Law Racing riding a KTM.

"I had my KTM under the Yamaha tent next to Jason and Grant Langston's YZF's! I don't know how that worked out but it did! That team was cool and got me to where I am now, it was relaxed which was what I needed. Jason's a cool guy and would help with lines and stuff, he still does at the supercross. I really enjoyed working with him."

Rather than lining up at a British championship for his first pro ride, Anstie found himself on the line at Glen Helen for the first round of the '09 AMA Nationals against the likes of Jake Weimer, Ryan Dungey and Christophe Pourcel.

"I could have been racing British championships – that's the normal way people do it – but I was lined up next to

Jake Weimer and all I could think was 'wow, this is cool!' Obviously things didn't go my way. I went over a blind jump, landed on a fallen rider and went down. I got back up and tried to continue but the medical staff thought I'd broken my back or something! We just weren't prepared but it made me a lot stronger."

From there Max got stronger and stronger with a sixth place at Red Bud being the highlight of the season as Anstie started to feel he belonged as an AMA professional motocross racer.

"To start with it was weird racing against people that only a couple of years ago I was playing with their toy model in the sandpit. And now I'm one of them. It's the premier class and they are the fastest in the world – my speed wasn't bad, I could run their speed for two maybe three laps but after that I could literally only just hang onto the bike!"

After finishing ninth overall at round eight of the series at Washougal in July he signed up for the X Games SX class, getting the chance to mix it up with some of his heroes for the first time.

"It was a real hardpack track and everyone was on 450s. I remember coming out for practice and Bubba

SPECIFICATIONS

MAX ANSTIE >>>

Favourite music? "My favourite band is Jason Aldean – he sings 'Big Green Tractor'. I just love country music now that I'm in the US!"

Favourite book? "Any love novel..."

Favourite film? "Pretty Woman."

Favourite TV show? "American Idol."

Favourite food? "In and Out Burger."

Favourite drink? "I love DNA!"

Favourite pin-up? "Hannah Montana."

Favourite race? "I love to race so they are all my favourites."

Favourite racer – past? "Mervyn Anstie."

Favourite racer – present? "That's gotta be me of course!"

Favourite ice cream flavour? "Mint chocolate chip."

Favourite dinosaur? "Pterodactyl."

Favourite snack: "Ginger biscuits."

Favourite popstar: "Geri Halliwell."

Favourite DJ: "Chris Evans."

Favourite spice: "Ginger."

Favourite way of approaching something: "Gingerly!"





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MAX AT TACKS

Max lays a flat one at the Yamaha test track



After just a handful of SXs Max is a genuine podium threat



was out there, McGrath, Josh Grant, Josh Hansen – all of them on 450s and I was the only one on a 250. It was so weird for me riding around with them, I was still only young and hadn't taken it all in. As it went it didn't go my way at all – it was an amazing experience but in the race I was landed on by Blake Wharton, my foot got broke and I had to sit out the last four rounds of the Nationals."

A deal was already signed with the DNA Shred Stix/Star Racing Yamaha team to race both SX and the outdoors for 2010 and – working hard on building physical and mental strength – Max got healed up and came into his AMA SX debut at Anaheim 1 a changed rider.

"I went out in timed training and got second behind Jake Weimer. Canard was in there, all the fast guys. I knew I was ready, I mean I knew I was as fast as anyone else out there – I've just got to get out of the gate now!"

The heat race saw Anstie finish second behind team-mate Broc Tickle taking himself straight through to the Main Event at his first attempt. A poor start left him mired mid-pack but he came through to finish ninth – a solid and respectable finish for his maiden voyage.

"It's funny, it doesn't matter how well prepared you think you are, it's still a big deal. It's so big

when you get in there, when you line up and all the big flames go up. I was stood there in the tunnel, with my helmet and goggles, watching Bubba finishing the opening ceremonies thinking 'this is it, the first one, this is so cool!'

"The team were really happy but as far as my expectations go then I race to win. That's what I want to do and to be honest I'm not that far away. Those guys out there have more experience than me but I can run with them, just give me a holeshot and 15 good laps!"

By the time the series rolled around to San Diego for round five Max demonstrated just how near 'not that far away' is. With only three laps to go he was in second and chasing down Jake Weimer, only to be baulked by Jeff Alessi as he came around to lap him. Instead of settling for a safe second Max pushed too hard to catch back up and slipped off on the last lap, finally crossing the line fourth.

"As you saw a podium is definitely possible – give me a bit of luck and me feeling good and I don't see why I can't win a race. I get up at 5am every morning because I want to win – that's what it's about. No-one expects me to win because I'm the rookie but I belong out there and that's where it's at. I want to go out there and race as fast as I can and that's fast enough

to put me on top of the box."

As is so often the way with this sport, no sooner do you find your mojo than Lady Luck has a nasty habit of stealing it away. While lying in third – behind Weimer and Stroupe – in his Anaheim 3 heat race Anstie clipped the last whoop on a staircase section and took a trip over the bars. Unfortunately, it's not one he could walk away from and he was stretchered from the track for a three-day stint in hospital with what turns out to be a fractured hip.

"That's just the way it goes. I've been told that I may be able to ride again in about eight weeks so the plan is to try and get back for the last two rounds of the West Coast. From here it's back to the drawingboard to make sure it doesn't happen again."

Already looking to the future and thinking about the outdoor season, Max is staying positive. "It's going to be fun this year as I know the tracks. I just want to have fun and ride my dirt bikes. If I'm honest up until now I haven't thought too much about the outdoors as we're mid SX season but I'm looking forward to it. I'm living the dream and racing SX in the US and I want to continue with what I'm doing, continue working hard and I want to become one of the top guys out here."

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special feature



HM Plant Red Bull KTM elder statesman is Jake Nicholls - at the ripe old age of 19

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TALENT!

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WORDS BY SUTTY PHOTOS BY SUTTY AND RUTGER PAUW

It's fair to say that KTM are hedging their bets when it comes to the motocross world championship this year with at least two genuine title contenders ready to rock in each class – Antonio Cairoli and Max Nagl in MX1, Marvin Musquin and Shaun Simpson in MX2 and Steffi Laier and Livia Lancelot in the Women's class. Winning obviously means a lot to the Austrian bike builder which is why – in Europe at least – they appear to be one of the most proactive of the major manufacturers when it comes to development of both bikes and future talent.

Two racers proving that the rider development system works are Nagl and Simpson who have both filtered through from KTM-supported domestic squads to the full-on factory team. And if KTM UK's Managing Director Shaun Sisterson has anything to do with it Simpson is just the first of many Brits to make that breakthrough with the aid of Roger Magee's HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK team.

"Ultimately we're looking to provide factory team riders for KTM in a similar way to what we achieved with Shaun Simpson a couple of years ago," says Sisterson. "We really want the next Cairoli to be British and we want him to come through the ranks on a KTM but before we get to that point we have some very important domestic objectives to achieve – we want to win junior championships and we want to be the dominant force in the Maxxis championships."

Having already secured the last two British MX2 championship titles the Magee owned and operated squad are already on their way to becoming a 'dominant force' but at the same time are working towards fulfilling their other major objective of nurturing young talent. In fact the 2010 HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK team is what you could definitely describe as a junior squad – the eldest and most experienced team member only celebrates his 20th birthday at the first GP of the year in April while the youngest turns 13 two months later. So who are they?

Jake Nicholls needs little introduction to DBR readers and the Suffolk speedster is set to enjoy what should be his most successful season so far in his second year with the team. Likewise Graeme Irwin is back for another tour of duty except this time he's taking on a full year of GPs in 2010.

The remaining three riders are all newbies to the team. Natalie Kane's been the dominant force in British women's motocross for the last few years and she's hoping to translate that domestic dominance into world championship wins. Long thought to have the skills to be a world champ but not the fitness, the KTM UK team have already sent their newly signed speed queen on a winter-long physical training session with Jake Nicholls' trainer Steve Potter.

Future stars Nathan and Ben Watson complete the team line-up. Both brothers have already tasted championship success, are hungry for more and potentially could be the biggest beneficiary of KTM's drive to nurture future talent. With strong roots at domestic, European and world championship level competition there really is no manufacturer they would be better supported by – perhaps the future really is orange...

PING

Graeme Irwin's looking the make 2010 his breakthrough year



GOLDEN GRAEME!

THE EVER FRIENDLY FULL-THROTTLE YOUNG GUN WHO'S ON THE FAST TRACK TO SUCCESS...

Since shooting to prominence in 2007 by winning the inaugural Maxxis MXY2 championship as a 15-year-old 250F rookie, Graeme Irwin's been making steady progress through the adult ranks.

A double championship winner on the Emerald Isle in '08 it's doubtful that the 18-year-old from the coastal town of Carrickfergus will add another title to his tally in 2010 as he'll exclusively concentrate on top-flight domestic and world championship action for the first time in his short career.

But Irwin's a fast learner and he's in great shape too so I wouldn't bet against the #555 rider ruffling some feathers, rocking the rankings and beating some established stars this season.

DBR: It's been a while since I last saw you at the Dirt Bike Show – what's changed with you since then?

GI: "I've moved to Holland! I'm going to be based out there for the whole year and since I've been there I've been doing lots of training with Shaun Simpson's trainer Twan van den Heuvel."

DBR: And how's your throat now? It looked pretty nasty back then...

GI: "I had an operation on my tonsils a couple of weeks after the des Nations because it felt like they were killing me – I was in a lot of pain, I was sick and every time I rode I'd be very ill afterwards. Basically I was ill from halfway through the 2009 season and the problem meant that I couldn't train properly either – not a lot of people knew that. It was tough to know what to do – if I trained I made myself sick but if I didn't train I'd get slower."

DBR: What are your on-track expectations for 2010?

GI: "I'll be trying my hardest to win a British championship moto and I'd like to finish in the top 20 in the GPs – it's my first year so I need to learn all the tracks but I really want to score points. I think it'll be a good experience and if things keep improving the way I feel they are by the end of the year I'd like to be running near the top 10. For sure the speed is there now – I'm not looking for whole seconds anymore, just the wee little 10ths of a second here and there."

DBR: You look a bit smoother than last year too...

GI: "I've changed my riding style. I used to overuse the clutch but now I rarely touch it at all. By making that change it's smoothed my riding style right out."

DBR: This is your second year working with the KTM UK team – have you learnt much from your time with them so far?

GI: "I really have. Working with Swordy last year was great. If someone had have told me during 2008 that I'd be working with Swordy in '09 I wouldn't have believed them. He's a guy who's got a lot of experience – he's been right at the top, had an injury and come back again to win another British title and I've a lot of respect for him."

"The biggest things I learned with Swordy were that I needed to be better organised, work harder and eat properly. There was so much I picked up from him last year and he's such a friendly guy – he helped me out a lot."

DBR: How mentally tough do you reckon stepping up a level to the GPs will be?

GI: "To be honest I think this year I'm like the dark horse and nobody is expecting too much from me."

This year is going to be hard at times but overall last year was probably a tougher year for me. I moved over to England with just two bikes in a van and lived with Swordy's girlfriend's mum. As a 17-year-old living away from home for the first time it was a really hard thing to do mentally – I had no family, no friends, no nothing...

"I'd go practising and there'd be no-one there to help me out, take lap times or to watch to see what I was doing wrong – obviously I'd be with Swordy but he'd have his own things to worry about. So this year is one I'm really looking forward to. I reckon it could be a good year."

DBR: How good a year?

GI: "I always give 100 per cent and I believe that anything is possible. Top five in Britain would be an okay season but for sure I want to win. I definitely don't race to be a mid-pack guy – I don't sacrifice everything to do that. I've got a new mechanic – Jeremy Long – who is working full-time with me and will always be there to help and support me when I'm going practising or whatever. He's a cool guy and he's been around the sport for a long time and really knows the score – it's nice to have a guy who's young but well experienced too."

DBR: What are your long term goals?

GI: "Long term I'd like to be world champion and then maybe go to America and win there too. I've watched Shaun Simpson's career and when he was my age he was at a similar position. I think he's got a great opportunity to win the world championship this year and there's no reason why I can't be in that position in a few years either but we'll see."



The Reverend tears it up during pre-season testing in Spain

THE ELDER STATESMAN!

THE OLD GUY ON THE TEAM – 19-YEAR-OLD JAKE NICHOLLS >>

Entering his second season with the HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK squadron, Jake Nicholls is ready to step up to the plate and take on the world. Already one of the favourites to win the British MX2 title this year, The Reverend is also hoping to rise up into the top 10 of the world rankings after finishing 17th – and best Brit – in the '09 title chase. As a highly motivated and very talented individual who has an incredible work ethic, there should be absolutely nothing stopping the soon to be 20-year-old from reaching his goals in 2010.

DBR: How are your preparations for the new season coming along?

JN: "Really good – I'm really looking forward to this season. I had what I'd describe as a breakthrough year in 2009 and I know everything should be good again this time around. I have a great relationship with both the team owner Roger Magee and my mechanic Wayne Banks – who was Swordy's spannerman last year – and I already feel like we're making great strides towards finding the perfect set-up for 2010."

DBR: 2009 seemed like a strange year for you – you had a lot of problems but results wise you had your best season ever...

JN: "I did have a lot of weird things happen last year but I always say you make your own luck. I've had some **** things happen in the past so I can only think that I was doing some things wrong but I've managed to straighten them out a bit now."

"But when things are happening that are someone else's fault there's not a lot you can do about it – through all the bad stuff that happened last year I just kept my head down and concentrated on what I was doing. I didn't lose my head with anyone, we made a

couple of changes, I started working with Adam Lithgow and towards the end of the season things just started going better and better."

DBR: And you've got another new mechanic for this year?

JN: "Yeah, I'm working with Wayne Banks this year and he's on it so I can't see that we'll have the same kinds of problems we did in the early part of last year before Adam came on board – although you can never tell with bikes and stuff. At the end of the day everybody has a bike break at some point – it's the nature of the sport – but it's how you deal with it that matters."

DBR: How is the bike shaping up for this season – after last year you must have a head start with settings?

JN: "The bike is very similar to last year's really which is good because we already have some very good settings for them and they're very competitive too. We'll keep on working hard all year even though I know I'm already on a very good bike."

DBR: You look a little lighter than this time last year – have you purposefully cut weight?

JN: "I weighed just over 82kg last year and I'm around 76kg now or a little bit less than that. If I go any lighter than that I'll get ill so that's not an option. It makes it hard when I'm up against guys like Musquin and Roczen who are at least 10kgs lighter and on factory bikes but I don't feel like I'm at any disadvantage. I think a good rider can overcome these little differences. Weight wise I'm definitely on the upper limit for an MX2 rider but then again so are Shaun Simpson and Joel Roelants who are just as big as me – Frossard's a big old boy as well."

DBR: You're not normally the quickest guy off the line – do you think your weight affects your starts?

JN: "My starts have never been all that good. I definitely wouldn't blame my weight at all it's just down to poor technique. I've been working on them quite a lot already this year because I know it's something I need to improve on and starts are so important – like 95 per cent of any race."

DBR: What are your thoughts on the new format for the Maxxis?

JN: "I think it's gonna be brilliant and definitely great for the spectators. I'm really looking forward to the British championships this year – the only downer is how early it starts! It would have been nice to do Hawkstone first. I do like the new schedule with the 20-minute races though. The shorter races are more intense like a GP qualifying race which is something I'm used to. After a 20-minute heat race at a GP you can feel more tired than you would after a 40-minute moto so I think that after two of those shorter sprint motos people are really going to be feeling it before the last race of the day."

DBR: Do you feel like you're up for winning it this year?

JN: "My goal and the team's goal is to win the British championship and I see that as a very realistic goal."

DBR: And what about the world championship?

JN: "I'd like to elevate myself into the top five in the world championship and I believe I can do that too. If you look at the points from last year you had guys like Guarneri who'd on average run 5-7 on a weekend end up third in the championship. I ran near the top five at the end of last year so it's not an impossible task – consistency will be important though."

Nathan Watson's moved
up to a 250F for 2010...



THE BRO SHOW!

TWO TICKS WITH THE WATSON BROTHERS – NATHAN AND BEN!

In years gone by KTM's level of commitment to supporting youth motocross simply involved building the best 65cc and 85cc bikes they could but for 2010 that's all changing. The first British riders to benefit from this extra level of support are Nathan and Ben Watson who have been drafted into the official HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK race team.

Both brothers move up a class in 2010 with Nathan moving on to a 250F in the Youth Open class while Ben's gone back to basics as he aims to pick up major Big Wheel class honours on KTM's 85cc two-stroke. With plenty of guidance from the team – plus their old man Rob Meek – this pair of young guns have definitely got what it takes to be successful in this sport.

Preferring to do their talking on the track rather than off it, interviewing this pair of quiet and very polite youngsters was like squeezing blood from a stone but luckily Rob was there too to fill in the spaces...

DBR: How did the deal with KTM UK come about?

RM: "Ben was supported by KTM back in 2008 but with budgets being tight they weren't able to continue their

support in '09 but they did always keep their eye on him. At that point Nathan wasn't really at that high a level to deserve much support but then together the pair of them came good last year.

"We spoke with Roger Magee at the tail end of last year and it just so happened that KTM were keen to explore the possibility of running a junior team which is something that they hadn't really done before but with talent being spotted at a younger and younger age they felt it was important to get the ball rolling. They were able to offer a deal for both lads and even though we had good offers from other manufacturers my belief was that KTM are the best company to help nurture and take them all the way through their careers."

DBR: Nathan, you're stepping up to the full-size bike this year – how's the transition going?

NW: "By the end of the season I was way too big for my 150 so getting on the 250F was a bit of a relief. It's a really nice bike to ride and to be honest I'm getting so comfortable with it now it's almost like riding my 150 again."



...while brother Ben's
'downsized' to a BW85



Ben and Nathan are
among Britain's brightest
schoolboy talents

DBR: And Ben you've changed back to an 85cc two-stroke...

BW: "Yeah and I love it! It's a fun bike to ride and I find it easier as well. At first it felt a bit weird but now I'm used to it again I'm really happy. The weight difference is very noticeable too – the 150 felt so heavy in comparison, especially if I crashed and had to pick it up again so the KTM is definitely the right bike for me."

DBR: So Rob, what do think they can achieve this season?

RM: "It's going to be a tough year for both of them. It's Nathan's first year on a 250F which is quite a big change from the 150 and Ben will be moving up to the big wheel class. The difficulty there lies in the fact he's still quite a small 12-year-old – he'll only be 13 in June – and he'll be racing against kids who are 14 or 15. It's going to be physically tough for him because between the ages of 12 and 15 boys change physically a lot so he'll be at a disadvantage there – and there are gonna be some monstrous kids riding those 150 Hondas this year!"

KANE SUGAR!

IS EVEN SWEETER SUCCESS HEADED NATALIE'S WAY IN 2010?

Alongside full factory rider Shaun Simpson, HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK's Natalie Kane is probably Britain's brightest hope of becoming a world champion in 2010.

With the new season rapidly approaching the 18-year-old from Loughbrickland – that's a small village 27 miles or so south west of Belfast – has not only been training hard but gelling well with her new bike and team-mates.

If Nat stays injury-free another British title is more or less a given but has she got what it takes to improve on her third place ranking in the 2009 women's world championship?

DBR: How's the move to KTM working out for you so far?

NK: "I really like the KTM even though it's a totally different feeling bike to the Suzuki. I feel so much better on this bike and with this new start with a new team and a new trainer I feel very positive about the season ahead."

DBR: A new trainer?

NK: "When I moved to KTM Jake's trainer Steve Potter showed some interest in training me so since the Dirt Bike Show I've been living with him

and training with him every day. In the past I've always done the wrong type of training – I always just did some training like cycling instead of concentrating on building up my core strength which is important for a motocross rider.

"Steve's going to be watching my diet too and keep an eye on what I eat at the races so it should all work out quite well. It's been tough missing out on all the foods I normally eat – like crisps and stuff – but the good thing is that we've agreed that if I do well at the races I can eat what I like on the Sunday night. It was difficult changing my diet at the start but then when I saw the difference it made in my training and affected the way I felt the next morning then I knew it was worth the sacrifice."

DBR: MVR-D Suzuki's Gareth Chamberlain always told me that if you were fitter you could be world champion. It sounds like you've got that covered so is 2010 going to be your year?

NK: "My aim for this year is to keep my top three ranking in the world championship and go for wins whenever possible – I'd love to win the world championship but I'd be happy with top three in that and to retain my British championship. I'd also

like to race as many U23 rounds as possible and maybe even a Maxxis or so before the end of the year."

DBR: Do you enjoy racing with guys more than girls?

NK: "The biggest problem I have with women's racing is that there's very little competition for me in the British championship so I tend to ride a lot slower at home than I do abroad – I can pull out a good gap and then just maintain it. The British races are only 15 minutes too while the GPs are 20 so it's all quite different. That's why I plan on racing with the men more in 2010."

DBR: The women's world championship should be pretty interesting this year with all the main contenders basically riding the same bike...

NK: "Yeah the top five riders – Steffi Laier, Livia Lancelot, Maria Franke, Elin Mann and myself – will all be on KTM this year so the battle for bonuses is going to be tough for sure. I think out of all the girls I see as being a real threat there's only Larissa Papenmeier who'll be riding something different – her and Chiara Fontanesi."

DBR: Who do you see as being the biggest competition for the title?

NK: "I think Laier is going to be strong as always and it depends how Livia bonds with the KTM – I would imagine that they're the two favourites. Steffi is like seven years or so older than me and she's naturally a big and strong build while Livia is also more experienced than me – it just means I'll have to work harder and try harder if I'm going to beat them both."

The quickest female in the UK, Nat's set her sights on improving on third in the world



THE DREAM TEAM!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROGER'S REGIMENT...

When compared to long-in-the-tooth teams like Steve Dixon's regularly rebranded Yamaha outfit, Rob Hooper's Suzuki set-up or the CAS Honda collective, Roger Magee's UK regiment is a relative newcomer to the sport.

Originally only formed in 2005 to help keep Shaun Simpson's freshly-launched GP career moving, the Scotsman's meteoric rise through the ranks from 31st in '05 to fourth in just three GP seasons is well documented but what other top stars have plied their trade under Roger's awning?

Well, back in the team's Wulfsport Honda days Gordon Crockard was signed up to the squad alongside Simpson and Scott Probert. While Crock scored a very creditable 13th in the 2006 MX1 world championship, Simpson slipped to 33rd in MX2 while Probert failed to make the cut at GP level but learnt a lot in the process.

The following year saw the squad switch to Kawasaki machinery and Simpson start to improve drastically, rising to 24th come the end of the year. However, it was a lonely season for Shaun inside the Wulfsport/7-Up team awning as MX1 team-mate Mark Jones snapped an ACL in pre-season training and missed 90 per cent of the race season.

KTM joined the party for '08 as did Whitby's James Noble who after a million years racing Hondas became the team's MX1 pilot. This arguably remains the team's best season as Simpson scorched to the British MX2 title and fourth in the world while Noble secured second in the British champs and 19th in the GPs. Meanwhile, back in the UK Alex Snow captured the team's first and so far only U21 title with a string of solid results.

The team notched up more domestic success in '09 with Stephen Sword winning the MX2 title as Nicholls romped home second in a breathtaking season finale while Irwin secured ninth. In the GPs Nicholls ended the year as best Brit in 17th while Sword limped home four places further back after a somewhat disappointing season overseas for the veteran Scotsman.

SUPREME STEFAN EVERTS
STYLIST BRIAN HUTCHINSON
BASKS IN 'THE SUMMER OF LOVE'
AT TOFT HILL, BISHOP AUCKLAND
IN 1967



THE LIKELY LADS!

JACK GETS ALL MISTY-EYED THIS MONTH AS HE RELIVES HIS YOUTH AND THE HALCYON DAYS OF THE NORTH EAST SCRAMBLING SCENE...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

Brad Anderson's richly deserved 2009 British MX1 title made this engaging, granite-hard 'Geordie' just the second champion ever to emerge from County Durham, 'the County of the Prince Bishops'.

My native North East had waited a long time to fete another full-on British champion. Anderson is the quiet son of Phil, a dry liner in the building trade from the small town of Tow Law, which nestles beneath the North Pennines in Weardale (20 miles north west of my own birthplace in Billingham-on-Tees). In contrast, his only predecessor as a Durham-born champ – Bryan 'Wild' Wade – was a brash, well-spoken public schoolboy from Barnard Castle, high up the posh end of the Tees Valley, 15 miles south of Tow Law.

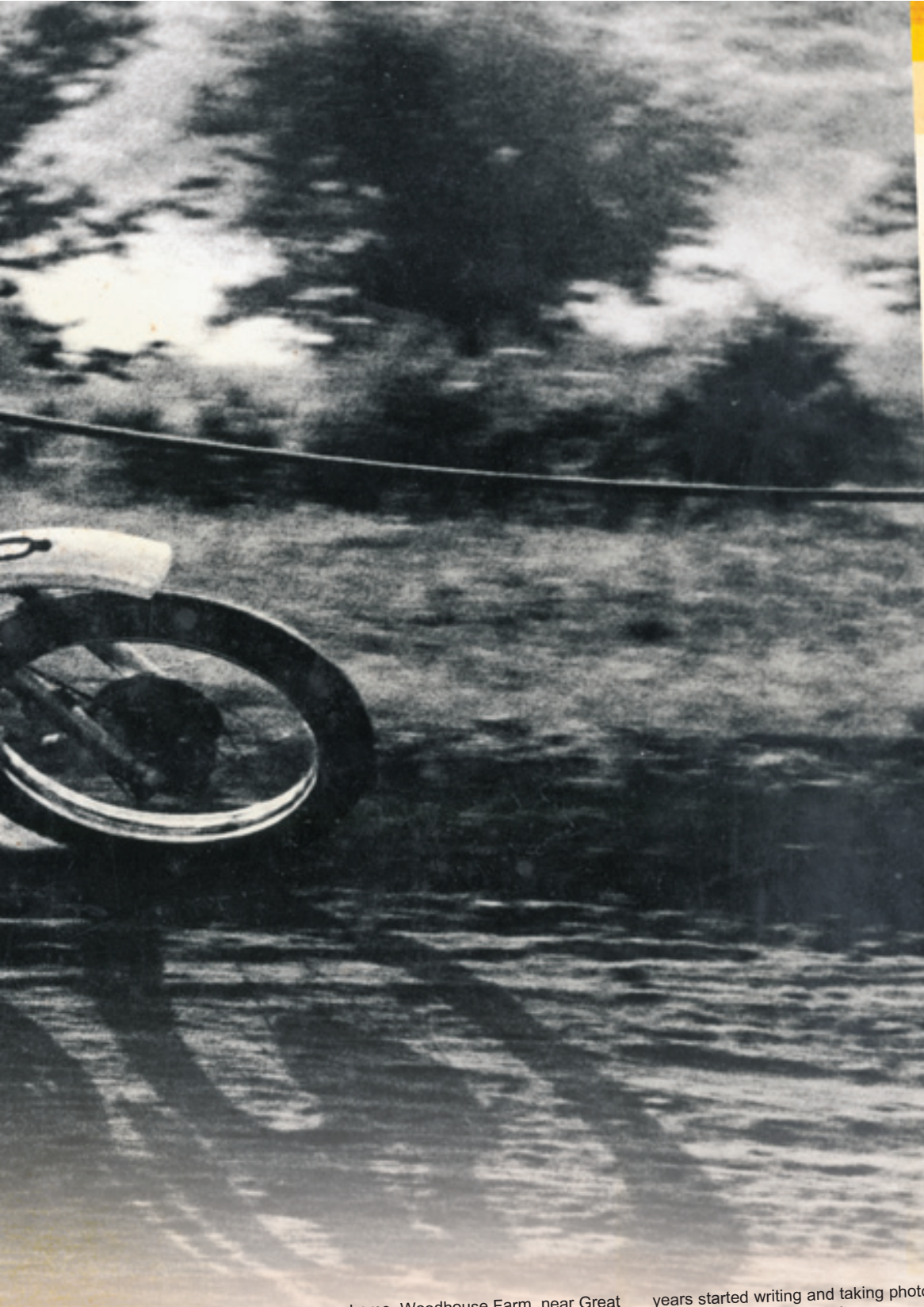
'Wadey' was a flamboyant youth who arrived at meetings with his Greeves on a trailer towed by his dad's Jaguar. I remember heads being shaken as he broadsided brilliantly to a halt alongside the Jag in the paddock at Carlton Bank, scattering startled spectators. He wore a yellow shirt with 'Hi Brutus Man' stitched on the back and a distinctive cross-banded black and white helmet design he retained throughout his career. Inspired by former European 250 champ Dave Bickers, Bryan adopted Dave's aggressive riding style and followed the famous 'Coddensham Flyer' to the Greeves factory and won them the British 250 title in 1969.

Wade subsequently claimed 250 and 500cc British crowns for Husqvarna in 1971 and 1972, then completed a full house of national

championships by winning the 125 series for Suzuki in 1974. Still a child at heart, Bryan has ended up running off-road biking adventures in Borneo!

Like 'Bad' Brad, 'Wild' Wade cut his teeth on those fine, rough hillsides of Durham and North Yorkshire. They were the tracks of my own childhood too and some were ridden by Phil Anderson and his mates during the '70s. They would scrape the money together to travel as far as Bassenthwaite in Cumbria though this meant jumping out and pushing their Morris Minor pick-up over the top of the Pennines at Alston! Normally they'd stick to local venues like Pea Farm, Stanley, Toft Hill at Bishop Auckland, Iveston near the Consett steelworks and Pity Me outside Durham City.

Armed initially with my mam's Kodak



Brownie, then an old Praktica with brown leather case, I set out on the motocross trail, meeting and photographing a whole new band of charming people from backgrounds totally alien to my own upbringing as a young townie, bussed to grammar school in Hartlepool and allowed – by my reluctant dad – to buy a 50 quid motorbike when I turned 16.

Motocross was a much more regionally focused sport in the '60s. The farmers, builders and local heroes who formed the backbone of the sport in Durham and North Yorkshire could race ACU events every weekend without leaving the North Eastern and East Yorkshire Centres. My first meeting – at Hutton Conyers, Ripon – was followed by the closest circuit to

home. Woodhouse Farm, near Great Ayton (where the ultimate local legend Captain James Cook – to whom I'm distantly related! – attended school) lay at the foot of the majestic Cleveland Hills south of Middlesbrough and boasted breathtaking climbs and plunges through bushes, old quarry workings and across the odd ditch that are still vividly visible to this day.

In a lush green meadow that operated as the paddock I was introduced to my first 'scrambler'. John Watson was a 19-year-old farmer's son from Castleton, atop the North Yorkshire Moors near Whitby. Short, stocky and spectacular, John raced a Greeves that memorable afternoon, has remained a firm friend to this day, still rides trials and in recent

years started writing and taking photos for our sister paper T+MX!

I also met the Tate brothers, two farmers who received help from the Dot factory. The younger and faster was Ron from Picton, the older, Maurice – now in his late 70s – still runs Church House Farm at Swainby, another picturesque postcard village in the ancient County of Cleveland. Their 'team-mate' Norman Crooks sadly passed away at the end of last year but evergreen all-rounder Brian Hutchinson, a super-smooth stylist from Stokesley, continues to compete in trials today!

Other local hotshots included Guisborough's Stan Jones on a very fast, revvy Triumph-engined BSA (or Tribsa!) and a classic Gold Star BSA



was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

Usual signature of bearer
Signature du titulaire

Jack Burnicle

Usual signature of wife
Signature de la femme

(S.33313)

2 DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT

Bearer	Titulaire	★	Wife	Femme
Occupation	GRAPHIC DESIGNER			
Place of birth	BILLINGHAM			
Date of birth	9/3/47			
Country of Residence	ENGLAND			

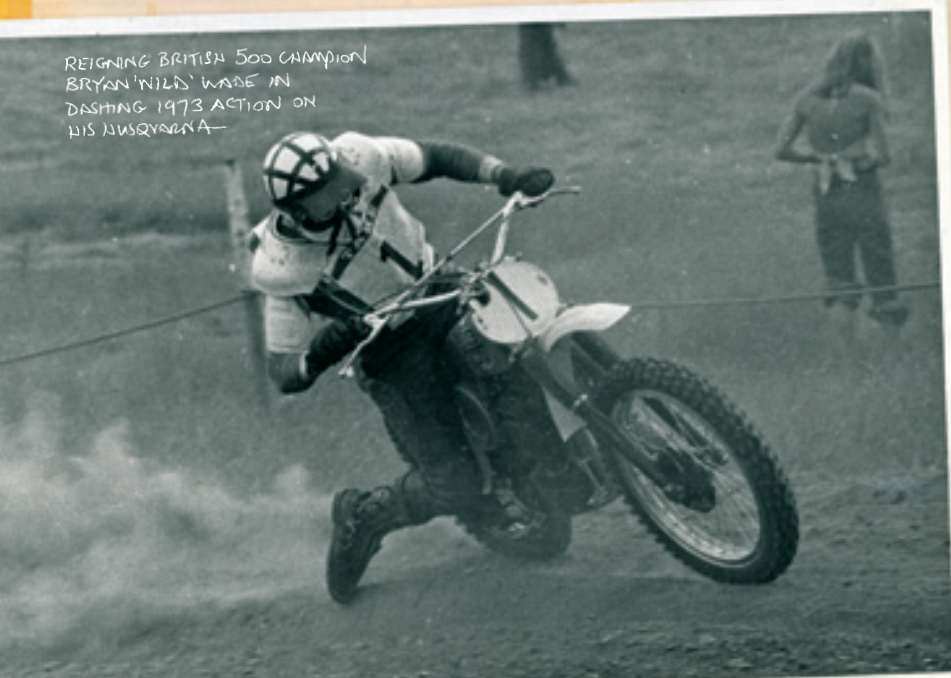


RONNIE TATE HURLS HIS 250 DOT
ROUND BOLTON IN THE 1967
THRUXTON GRAND NATIONAL

JOHN WATSON ATTACKS
TOFT HILL DURING THE
BEAUTIFUL SUMMER OF '67
ABOARD HIS 440 BSA



REIGNING BRITISH 500 CHAMPION
BRYAN 'WILD' WADE IN
DASHING 1973 ACTION ON
HIS HUSQVARNA



his native Tow Law, Brad has no local riding facilities available and heads over to his father-in-law's track at Great Salkeld in Cumbria, following the same precipitous route that used to defeat Phil's Morris Minor pick-up. Or to the demanding, sandy wastes of South Gare at Redcar on the mouth of the River Tees (where he hurt himself training for last year's MX des and missed the race!).

Meanwhile his predecessor has truly become the 'Wild Wade of Borneo'. If you fancy joining Bryan Wade for a barrel-load of laughs and off-road mayhem, check out www.borneobikingadventures.com or email Wadey direct for more information on info@borneobikingadventures.com

was a potent weapon in the hands of burly Dickie Preston from Potto, a hamlet five miles south west of Stokesley. You'll surely have seen big red trucks barrelling along Britain's motorways bearing the superscripture 'Preston's of Potto' in huge yellow letters. Yes, that vast haulage contracting company is the pride of Dickie Preston, an ebullient man who, along with Middlesbrough's Gordon Blakeway, could really mix it with visiting factory stars at the traditional national meetings. Established grand prix riders like Jeff Smith, Arthur Lampkin, Bryan Goss, Vic Eastwood, Vic Allan, Chris Horsfield and, ultimately, Bryan Wade contested annual classics like the Cleveland Grand National – held on a majestic sandstone fortress at Carlton Bank – and faced strong local opposition cheered on by large, rapturous crowds.

Further south Bolton, near Thirsk, hosted exciting internationals as well as British championship rounds under ambitious promoter Colin Hutchinson who eventually became Chief Executive of Chelsea Football Club! Hutchinson's 1960s' internationals attracted superstars like six-time world champion Joel Robert – then the Usain Bolt of global motocross – and Bryan Wade's stylistic inspiration Dave Bickers as well as

Wadey himself, of course!

Harwood Dale, Scarborough, is one of the few venues in use today, as is Crook Farm at Wretton near Pickering. Old favourites like Belmont Park – a marvellous hillside venue on the edge of Durham City – and Thickley Farm, Shildon (where in 1966 I first saw a Montesa, ridden by Wade's great rival Derek Dowson!), vanished before Phil Anderson's time. Others survived to welcome son Brad who turned to motocross at eight after winning the European U7 BMX championship in Holland two years earlier! He just missed out on terrific Toft Hill (where I first glimpsed a CCM in the hands of 'works' rider Mike Barnes in 1972) but enjoyed the heather moorland at Wolsingham and Eastgate which staged British 125 national rounds near the cement works in Weardale.

Brad also experienced Howe Hills, Sedgfield, where world champs Graham Noyce and Neil Hudson rode British Open rounds in the late '70s. Pity Me and the popular Pea Farm which was still open as a practice track until last year. The final round of a national schoolboy series was once scheduled to run there. Brad lay second – with a chance of becoming 60cc champion – but it was cancelled due to dust!

Yet today, having married and set up home in



RON TATE (DOT, CENTRE) &
BRYAN WADE (GREENS, FAR
LEFT, IN CRISS-CROSS HELMET)
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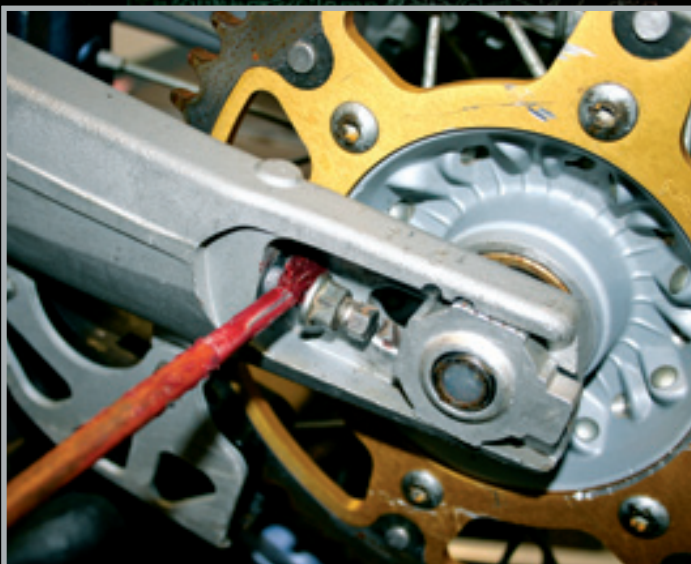
A FINE SPRINKLING OF WALKER WISDOM TO KEEP YOUR DAY AT THE RACES ON TRACK...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Rich T

For this month's column we're hitting you legends of readerland with a few basic tech tips. Now these little tips will seem too simple for some of you out there but it's pretty amazing how the most basic and quickly performed tasks can make a massive difference

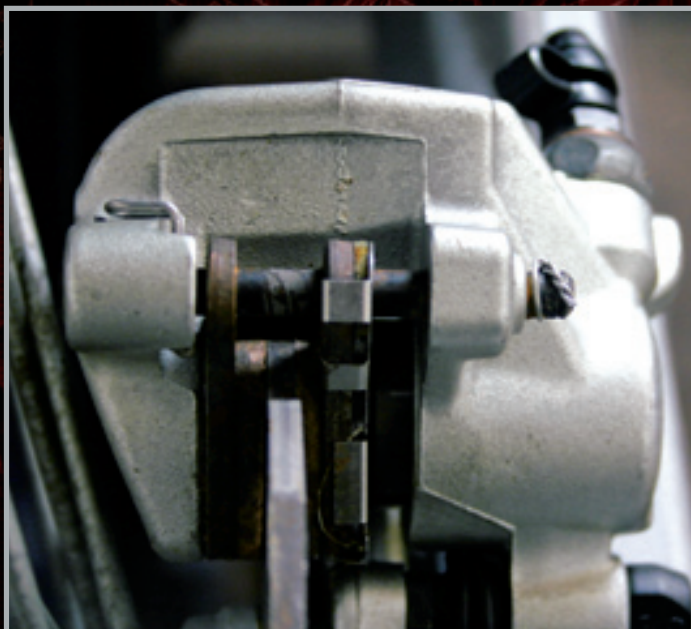
to the life of your pride and joy. Whether you are in your garage or out at the track or trails, just a few minutes taken to make sure things are correct are always worth it in the end...

Ok, here we go with some techtiptasticness...



001|| Grease those chain adjusters! I see a lot of bikes at the track with the adjuster locknuts loose and spinning back away from their locking point allowing the chain adjuster to move away from the adjuster block. This is dangerous as I have seen rear wheels move out of line and the hub and sprocket end up getting smashed to bits and locking the rear wheel. This is obviously a bad deal!

Simply dab some grease onto the thread and lock the nut up. The grease will hold the locknut in place as its thick texture fills the small gaps in the metal to metal threads and stops the nut vibrating loose.



003|| Get your lockwire out! Lockwire is great and you should always carry some in your toolbox or trail bag. A good tip for KTM brake fixing pin clips is to wire them in as they have a tendency to get popped out of place, causing over-the-bars moments. The tip to stop this happening in the first place is to wire the bottom side of the 'R' clip so it cannot come out at all.



002|| If you happen to be taking numbers or graphics off your panels and the glue is super sticky, a little tip is to soak some cloth or paper roll in neat petrol and place over the glued up area for a minute or two to soak in and loosen the gunk. It will then wipe off much more easily.



004|| More lockwire... So many grips are fitted each week and so many are lockwired securely on. As a finishing touch to the gripwiring process you must cut the twisted wire around two millimetres from the grip and push the end of the wire up into the grip rubber. This means the wire will not snag on your gloves and generally cause hassle and discomfort. I have seen professional riders finish a race with bleeding hands as their mechanics don't have the savvy to wire the grips on correctly. Tuck that wire end away!



005II Okay, you've tightened your chain up and you are about to re-tighten your rear wheel. Hold it! The wheel needs to be pulled up snug to the adjusters before tightening. Most people use a spanner or some sort of metal object. Don't do it! Simply use a soft cloth or a glove as this does not stress the sprocket or chain.



007II After every wash or ride on your weapon of choice, whip the drain plug from the bottom of the floatbowl on your carb. This is especially necessary on four-strokes as these pre fuel injection units suck crud in from everywhere like magic crud sucking in things! Drain it like you drain the main vein!



006II These days there are a lot of quality tools around for not a lot of money. One of these tools is a small torque wrench for low torque operations. The fork clamps are a part of the bike where you should take no chances. Basically, the fork tubes are made from quite thin material and if you tighten the clamps up too much you will place a negative effect on the forks' sliding action. To stop you over-tightening the fork clamps a torque wrench is necessary. Get one and make sure you clean the bolts and clamps, dab some grease on the threads and torque to the setting recommended by the manufacturer.



008II Please, please, please, people! I know that the little magic air bleeders on your forks seem like a good idea and some of the newer ones are okay but you must stop sitting on your bikes and hitting the little buttons with pressure on your forks. Your forks need the correct air gap and this is atmospheric pressure in there. When you have pressure on the forks they will sink down and close the air gap. This means your forks will not be working correctly. Put your bike on a stand and de-air the forks with the front wheel under no pressure.

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009|| Fork seals are an issue and like most things on your bike they need a little attention. You can get a long life out of your seals with a simple wipe off and light greasing to keep everything sliding and running sweet as a sweet nut. Pop the dust seal, clean the area up into the oil seal and 'paint' a light amount of grease around the fork leg and work into the seals.



011|| I have pointed this one out a couple of times in my column before but I still have bikes turning up at DBR tech HQ with filter oil pouring out of the airbox where the filter has been over-oiled. This over-oiling will cause the bike to run inconsistently at times. Simply wrap your filter in paper towel after oiling and leave for a while to remove all the excess and unnecessary oil from the filter.



010|| A quick and inexpensive way to stop breaking those expensive clutch and brake levers when you are having an 'off' day is to take some ptfе plumber's tape and wrap it around the handlebars where your levers fit on. This allows the lever to pivot around in a crash saving you cash and hopefully getting you to the end of your event or ride day.



012|| This tip is a beauty. Brake not working great? Losing the feel at the lever? Getting a pumping sensation through the lever? This could mean your brake disc is bent! Never fear, adjustable man is here! Take a bit of time to sit and look at your brake disc as you spin the wheel then simply slip the adjustable spanner over the bent part of the disc and 'tweak' it until it straightens up. This may take some patience but most discs are able to be rescued from the scrap bin!



WIN!WIN!WIN!WIN!

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TOUGH STUFF!

EVEN WITH AN EASED COURSE THE 2010 TOUGH ONE IS TWO HOURS OF HURT THAT TAKES THE WORLD'S TOP EXTREME ENDURO PILOTS TO HELL AND BACK AGAIN...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttty

It's just about the maddest, baddest, most hellish two hours you can spend on two wheels. Oh yes, The Tough One isn't called The Tough One for nothing! But this year it actually starts the day as The Too Tough One and organisers are forced into some last-minute course alterations before the main event – from now on to be known as the Not Quite So Tough One – can kick off.

The alterations in question – namely the removal of two downhill sections from the Pro and Expert route – are taken on safety grounds and Steve Ireland and his Wirral Off-Road Events team should be applauded for having the nuts to knock out what are without doubt the most spectator-pleasing parts of the course. Laying on a killer extreme enduro course is one thing, laying out an extreme enduro course that kills is another.

The big problem is mostly the weather. The descent at the top of the quarry is in shadow all day and from sunrise to sunset remains icier than my ex-wife's heart. The bottom descent – although pretty much thawed by the time the Pro class gets into Hot Lap action – is much longer and steeper with next to bugger-all room for error.

"It was a big decision to cut out the two downhills," admits Steve at close of play. "Paul Edmondson went down the big one into the quarry bottom 18 months ago and I had the balls to go down it just before the snow came in November. I crashed at the bottom but I got down it. I'm pretty sure that all the Pros could have come down no problem but when you put the Experts in the mix we were looking at danger.

"But that one hill at the top was so icy and when you've got someone like Dougie Lampkin saying he's a bit unsure about going down it then you have to take notice. I have to think as an organiser that they're not robots. There was no option of just putting the pros down there and I think we did the right thing. It certainly didn't detract from it being The Tough One – ask the people who've come over the line, this race just breaks you down, saps the energy out of you."

And there are plenty of broken men at the end of the two hours – plus one or two who look close to

breaking before the event even gets under way at the prospect of tackling the second downhill, first as part of their sighting lap and then for the new Hot Lap contest to determine the first 10 men away for the main event. As it happens the full Pro field remain unscathed although some efforts are a little less controlled than others – yes, Geoffrey Walker, I'm talking about you – and given that these are the Pros tackling it one at a time, the prospect of mixing in the Experts class in race conditions is a Health and Safety nightmare so the hill is out.

With reigning champ Taddy Blazusiak missing the event with a hefty dose of flu it's four-time winner David Knight who starts clear favourite. And after the Hot Lap there's no reason to expect anything other than a dominant DK as he posts a time 10 seconds quicker than anyone else over the shortened qualifying course.

For the TM Racing-sponsored main event the Experts get away first from a separate startline near the top of the course while the Pros set off moments later from the quarry bottom. Paul Edmondson grabs the holeshot but his lead only lasts until he catches up to the tail end of the Expert field and he gets delayed in the woods before pulling out to save himself for the opening BEC round the following weekend.

Knighter hits the front early on and with the Manxman on a fully developed KTM two-smoker there's to be no repeat of '09 when he led until the clutch on his factory BMW fried within the first few laps. Dougie Lampkin initially holds second before first Tom Sagar and then Graham Jarvis get past. Grimbo – a life-long rival to Dougie first on trials bikes, now in extreme events – moves into second and shows a seriously quick turn of pace on the 300F Sherco. He's never going to catch Knighter but he's a clear second and looking to be in cruise control when clutch problems force him to pull out.

At the flag Knighter's lapped everyone apart from Sagar and with a finishing time a full 10 minutes ahead of the second place man can't be far from the local hero's rear wheel. Dougie takes third with visiting Kiwi Rory Mead next man home ahead of Paul Bolton.

The Tough One

DK's back on a KTM – and back to his brilliant best – to claim his fifth T1 win



Bolts barges his way
through to fifth



Local hero Tom Sagar is
second overall for the
second year on the trot

QUOTE UNQUOTE

TOM SAGAR >>

"Second again! I didn't expect that! I was hoping for a top five really and that was it but the bike was good – I used my dad's, I've been riding a 450 and we decided to use a 250F which was a good decision. The 450's a big bike and I rode it last year and it was all right but I didn't want to ride the big bike again, that was enough for me. I'm mega pleased. A podium's a good result here and I'm in one piece and that's why I'm not going to The Boulder Dash – the British championship is next week and I don't want to go and hurt myself."

PAUL BOLTON >>

"I'm happy with fifth. I'm just finding my feet after my knee injury and working hard with my normal job – it's hard to get fit again but I feel like I'm finding my form. It's never ending – I'm either spannering the bike or working spannering trucks or I'm helping a friend at Specialist Breakers who's given me some work because I'm struggling for work as well. Lisa my girlfriend has actually paid for Hell's Gate and Erzberg because I'm absolutely broke. But I'll keep plugging away, keep trying to get good results and keep smiling."







Spot the Welshman!





Grimbo's going good until his clutch soils itself



Former world trials champ Dougie Lampkin is at home on the rocks but struggles to stay with Knighter and Sagar on the faster sections

QUOTE UNQUOTE

DOUGIE LAMPKIN >>

"I'm still a long way behind. When we got up onto that quick stuff up there I was behind Tom and he was pulling away. I couldn't turn it, couldn't get it going – it was just too quick for me today. It's needs to be a little harder for me. But I really enjoyed the event."

GRAHAM JARVIS >>

"I've had a bit of a clutch problem, I don't know if I've banged it or what. But it was going all right – I was enjoying it and felt good. We've made some improvements to the bike and I think I'm a bit fitter as well. Extreme enduros are my priority. I'm not riding any trials and I don't do any other enduros, just the extreme stuff."

"I'm going to be trying to get some motocross speed – that's what I need to work on – but it's all coming together and I'm happy. I'm disappointed about today but it's one of those things with these types of races. Anything can happen and you've just got to accept it. A bit of luck will come my way soon – I'm due it..."

DAVID KNIGHT >>

"The worst thing was the Expert guys – I'd get away [from the Pros], then get behind some of the Experts and the Pros would catch me up again so it was a waste of time pushing too hard for the first laps really. Once I got past all those guys and got a clear lap I could pin it and get away. I came in and refuelled on the hour, grabbed some new goggles and just pinned it until the end."

"I'm disappointed Taddy wasn't riding but I think I would have near lapped him around there anyway. It's been hard but it's more like a GNCC type of thing in the end and once I got going into my own pace it suits me pretty good. I was also getting used to the bike because I haven't really ridden a two-stroke for a bit so once that first hour was out of the way it was pretty good. I'm made up to have won."

RICHARD ELLWOOD >>

"I'm f**ked! It's been really wet and my shoulder, which I dislocated quite a bit ago, is killing. I'm seriously in pain. I've come from a trials background – I used to do world rounds – but I decided to do something a bit speedier and extreme enduros are a perfect mix of trials and motocross. I love them! It's been really tough today. The going's good but fitness plays a big part in something like this – it'd probably help if I did some training!"



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RESULTS

PRO >>

1	David Knight	Red Bull KTM	14 laps
2	Tom Sagar	Fast Eddy Suzuki	14
3	Dougie Lampkin	Beta	13
4	Rory Mead	Yamaha	13
5	Paul Bolton	Eurotek KTM	13
6	Ben Hemingway	Eurotek KTM	12
7	Juan Knight	Gas Gas	12
8	Richard Ellwood	KTM	12
9	Simo Kirsi	BMW	12
10	David Myers	CB KTM	12

EXPERT >>

1	Gary Daniels	KTM	12 laps
2	Gary Jenkins	KTM	11
3	Stephen Dixon	Scorpa	11
4	Pascal Berlingieri	KTM	10
5	Owain Humphreys	KTM	10
6	Gavin Johnston	KTM	10
7	Kieran Jones	Gas Gas	10
8	Julian Harvey	KTM	10
9	Tyson Jones	Husaberg	9
10	Kalem Hicks	Yamaha	9

CLUBMAN >>

1	Pete Bailey	KTM	8 laps
2	Gethin Humphreys	KTM	8
3	Danny Thomas	KTM	8
4	Adrian Deeley	KTM	8
5	Niki Walker	KTM	8

VETERAN >>

1	Craig Parkes	KTM	8 laps
2	Les Winthrop	KTM	8
3	Gary McCoy	KTM	8
4	Klaus Eigl	KTM	7
5	Chris Ball	KTM	6



The Tough One



Kiwi Chris Birch struggles on his T1 debut



Paul Sagar - Tom's dad - takes one for the team



Bolts laps up the pain of the Tough One



WOR's Sadist in Chief Steve Ireland

QUOTE UNQUOTE

STEVE IRELAND >>

"From an organiser's point of view today's gone very well. Nobody's been hurt - well, one guy's broke a collarbone but for an extreme event that's a pretty low attrition rate. Obviously the quarry wasn't as full as I'd have like it to be but if we'd brought the cars in from the front it would have looked a lot fuller and there's still quite a lot of people here but we're in a recession and also the ticket system I've had to operate here at Nantmawr has been a nightmare - you've got to be loyal to the people who had bought one in advance and then try and not make it too expensive on the gate.

"I've said this for the last three years to you guys and I sound like a stuck record but I can assure you it won't be here next year. I have a venue with plenty of parking and I've moved it to April 2011 so hopefully we'll have better weather and not have to worry about this bloody white stuff."



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After a nightmare in '09 Kevin Windham has come out fighting and turned his career around



M A S S APPEAL!

IN THE 16 YEARS K-DUB'S BEEN A PROFESSIONAL RACER HE'S EARNED A LEGION OF FANS – AND NOT ALWAYS BECAUSE HE'S BEEN WINNING...

GEICO Powersports Honda's Kevin Windham has a lot of fans – and it's not just because he's fast. Even when he's not fast, he has legions of fans. That should be a lesson to a number of the younger riders around today – fans like someone who is engaging and who has personality. The speed is almost secondary. We talked to K-Dub after his podium finish in Indianapolis where he led more than half of the Main Event.

DBR: You put up one hell of a fight last weekend. It seemed like the kind of track where if you could've gotten some breathing room maybe you could've run away with it. But they didn't give you any...

KW: "Yeah, you know, I was pretty bummed about that to be honest with you because everybody's saying it was a great ride and I agree that it was good to be up there but you're generally really pumped to be on the podium when you're third, fourth or fifth fastest – all day long I was the fastest qualifier, had all the gate picks..."

DBR: Still not too shabby for an 'old' man who maybe doesn't want to take the same risks as he might have done a few years back...

KW: "You get to a point in racing where everybody does it because they have to. It's like taking a huge investment out in a business and then quitting as soon as you're fully invested. So, where I'm at in life, I'm opening health clubs and doing some other things that are going to keep me going but I race because I enjoy it, not because I have to.

"I'm financially secure to the point that I don't have to race anymore – which is nice – but it also kind of makes you think when some asshole crosses you on the face of a triple when you're about to fly 70 feet through the air 'I didn't sign up for this!' The will to win always overcomes that, though. You always want to be up front. This sport, more than any of them, is geared toward the top one or two guys, not anyone else."

DBR: But you're popular not just because you go fast on a dirt bike. You're popular because people like you.

KW: "I appreciate that and that's a huge part of why I do what I do and why I'm still out there. Through my career I've tried to be an open book and not necessarily told the fans what they wanted to

hear but I was honest about what was going on in my life and I think that's really what fans want to hear – honesty. It's easy to follow a guy who tells you what's going on in his life and opens up and who has some peaks and valleys."

DBR: It creates an emotional investment for the fans. They see you out on the track and they want you to do well – it's one of those things that a lot of the young riders don't understand yet...

KW: "It's definitely cool and it's just me which works out well. It's not hard to maintain something when it's really you. It just comes easy. You should be honest with the fans. It doesn't make sense that some of these riders talk like they're fearful of the facts. They're so worried about giving their competitors an advantage by saying something that they don't think they should that they end up holding themselves in so much that they can't really be understood either as an athlete or as a person."

DBR: How has your outlook on the season changed from how it was prior to the season starting?

KW: "Coming into this season I was at an all-time low because I had the crappiest year I could've possibly had last year, barring injury and things like that. Last year was a very, very hard season to go through mentally and physically, just because we weren't in the hunt at all and, like I said earlier, being in the hunt is kind of what makes this fun and worth it.

"We've got some big players out right now but I'm in the hunt, even at races where I'm not riding my best or whatever. It has taken me a little while even after a 16-year career to believe that I should be there and that's slowly happening as I keep proving it to myself. It's easy to say you can do it going into a season because I've been there and done it before but you're also carrying around a little extra emotional weight because people are starting to call you old and things like that. At some point, you can't do it anymore, right?"

"But through results I've proven it to myself that I can do it and I'm starting to believe in it again. I think it's just about trying to reverse the snowball effect of having such a terrible year in '09 and I want to turn that into a positive this year and beyond so that I can build something for next year. It takes a while to come from your deepest valleys and it wasn't a mental wreck like I was in the early part of the 2000s but nevertheless I started digging from a pretty deep hole regarding how I felt about my riding in '09." ♦

Racer X's editors at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/XX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of

STATESIDE



DBR: I've been writing a lot lately about how talent can be a bad word in our sport because if you have it and you don't win every time people think you're lazy...

KW: "One of the biggest frustrations for me in my career – and my biggest shortcoming – is my inability to believe in myself. I think Ricky Carmichael's strongest point was the fact that he always believed. That belief in yourself is way more valuable than just having natural talent to ride a motorcycle. I've struggled with that. My mind has held me back from a lot of things in racing and in life in general so everyone has to find their strong points and utilise them and to say that everyone out there isn't talented is not giving supercross much justice."

"We all really work hard and different people's assets show through in different ways. If it's not visible to a person then obviously it may not get noticed but I can say that mine's visual. People see me ride a bike and say 'man, that looks like it doesn't take any work' but, hey, I wear a heart rate monitor and I'm here to tell you

it takes work. It's not like I'm magically racing and my heart rate's just cruising around at 120 beats per minute. It's definitely work. I wish I had different strong points sometimes, though. I'm appreciative of the ones I have but I wish I had some of Ricky's as well. For that matter, I can name a trait from almost every rider on the track that I could use as a strong point for myself if I could take that talent from them."

DBR: Do you get different fans now that you're in your 30s?

KW: "Oh, yeah! Of course, dude. It used to be like where these cute little girls would come up at like 19 years old or something and they'd be like 'we love you!' and now it's like cute little girls cruising around and they're like 'my mom loves you!'"

"But I think it's cool because a lot of my fans, while it's obvious that they're probably older they also have kids. It's either really young kids whose dads watched me win a race in like 1995 and they're fans because

their dad is talking about me all the time or there's the older people, too. But I'm kind of missing that 18-24 range..."

DBR: Yeah, those people love James Stewart, Jason Lawrence or even your team-mate Justin Barcia...

KW: "Man, Barcia's got fans who weren't even alive when I was winning championships and stuff, you know? You realise that this is my 16th season and Barcia's like 17 so the next round of guys who come in will not even have been born when I went pro."

DBR: I have that same problem looking at Playboy and seeing the centrefolds and I'm like 'man, I graduated high school and that girl was three...' but I guess it's a little different when it's actually guys you have to eventually race with. Especially if you're staying around until 2014 like you've been saying.

KW: "That's the goal!"



He almost won in Indy and K-Dub knows he's still got what it takes to get on the top of the box





A lack of self-belief has always been Windham's weak point but the veteran of the supercross scene is riding the crest of a wave of confidence right now

DBR: What was this off-season like in coming through and developing the bike with the stock suspension components and stuff?

KW: "It all started when Rick [Zielfelder] from Factory Connection and I went up to his place to test. He had me start riding on some of the stock-based stuff that he had developed seriously by working with amateurs and we decided to implement some of it in supercross and we've been really happy with it. Once again, the team has challenged me on a lot of issues – and that was one of them, which was to go into the test open-minded – and things went really well."

"It's been pretty good with the exception of one race, which was San Francisco, where I made a change and it was the worst change possible – and it was very, very minute. We've got a really good spec and a really good setting – one that's been tried and true so far on a lot of different dirt

conditions from east to west and we're happy with it. I really feel like for our team and what we're doing it's a testament to the team's hard work – and Rick's – that for the first time in my career stock is best. And when I say 'stock' obviously we're doing some major revalving to the insides but the components are basically what anybody can go out and buy. So while I was pretty vocal about the bike in '09 and how bad I thought it was it has now become one of the most economical bikes to go fast on."

"For me it's best in its original form which has been something that has definitely broken the mould of everything that I've ever learned about being a professional motocrosser with a factory ride."

DBR: You seem happy and those smiles have been around a lot this year. So how much of this change in you is equipment and how much of it is feeling better and being in a good place in your head?

KW: "I think it's a combination of everything and I think where I'm at with my family and in my life. I think the age is really beneficial to a lot of things that go on, along with my appreciation of the sport. Not a lot about the sport bothers me right now – the travel doesn't bother me, the autograph signings don't bother me and even talking to you right now doesn't bother me so it's a good place to be."

"I'm really enjoying my life and enjoying my job but I think a lot of my enjoyment comes from how well my bike is working. You've dealt with enough motocrossers to know that what happens at the races and how you feel about your bike is enough to make a marriage go bad. Honestly, it really has a profound effect on life across the board. So our team is great and they're on time so it's a culmination of everyone's will to win and what they're working for so life is good for the 14 right now."



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them up Stateside



L I C E N C E T O THRILL!

MAX HAS PASSED HIS DRIVING TEST BUT ALL THE ACTION'S
TAKING PLACE ON THE SX TRACK THIS MONTH...

Words by MAX ANSTIE Photo by STEVE COX

So I passed my driving test but I have to tell you I haven't driven a car since. The test was a bit mental though. Firstly I had to do the test in my dad's big pick-up truck and if any of you know my dad you'll know he doesn't like to waste time.

I had my supercross practice bike in the back because he didn't want to drive back home and then to the test track – just pop in, do a quick driving test first and then go ride! The DMV told me I couldn't do the test with my bike in the back so we unloaded it in the middle of the parking lot leaving my stepmum and six-month-old sister sat there with my practice bike and a fuel can. Then all of a sudden it was my turn, so the little Mexican lady said "right turn signal" and I complied and then she said "left turn signal" so I pushed the lever down and it all sounded like it was working but again she said "left turn signal please". At first I thought I was doing something wrong, then she came around and said "your left turn signal is not working. I can not take you on the examination like this".

So before I knew what was going on I was stood in the middle of the parking lot with 100s of lovely 16-year-old girls getting ready to do their driving tests. Sounds good doesn't it? Yeah, well this time it was me with a baby, a fuel can and a 250F! After some proper weird looks, finally my stepmum came back with the truck fully fixed and I was off again

and in line for my test. From then on everything ran relatively smooth and I was back on track getting ready for San Diego.

As most of you probably already know I did all right at San Diego, finishing up fourth in the Main. It had been raining on and off all week and in practice the track was really muddy. Eventually for the night show the track was getting better and better. I got a perfect start in my heat and was out in front on the first lap. Unfortunately, I hit neutral going through the rhythm section and gooned it, singling four of the jumps to eventually get back on track in third where I would end up.

Going into the Main I felt good and was really looking forward to it. I got a good gate and was in about fifth. I quickly made my way around one guy and then Canard went down so I was sat in third. For the next five laps I sat right on Wharton but could see Weimer getting away slightly so I knew I had to move fast. I was jumping this big double across the start and as I was in the air I was thinking to myself 'don't turn left Blake otherwise you're gonna get splatted' – I wasn't too bothered whether I was going to land on him, I figured he wasn't too bothered at the X-Games.

He was lucky so I made a clean pass on him in one of the bowl turns. I then set my sights on Weimer and actually began to close in on him. Eventually around lap 13 I was on him like a dog on

a mailman's leg. I went for the pass in the whoops but that didn't work so I stayed right with him going into the following section. Unfortunately for me I got held up with some lappers and was then about five seconds down. I pushed so hard and on the very last lap I was back on him. With two corners to go I pushed in a little too hard and went down. I got up fast and was still in second but when I went to go I was in neutral so I fell over again letting second and third slip by. So that was that!

We were going into the sixth West Coast round – Anaheim 3 – and after this round came a nine-week break when all the East Coast rounds would take place. I was all set to go and going really fast when in my heat race I made a slight mistake and went down breaking my pelvis. The hospital doctors said it would be a year before I could ride again but then again they also told me I had broken my ankle and I could put full weight on it and move around no problem.

So now we are two weeks from when I crashed and I am working with the best doctor in the world so the plan is to be back on the bike in the next couple of weeks and that will give me a good four weeks before Seattle which is round seven of the West Coast. We're on track and I am already stronger than before.

Talk to you next month...

Max

MAX POWER

FREE FOR ALL!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE BIG DOGS ARE SIDELINED?
EVERYONE ELSE STARTS TO FANCY THEIR CHANCES, THAT'S WHAT...

Only three rounds into the 17-round Monster Energy AMA Supercross Championship the big dogs – two-time champs Chad Reed and James Stewart – were already out. And what happens when the top two go out? All of a sudden everyone thinks they can win and the whole series changes. Funny how confidence works for you – and against you – when you're a racer.

At Anaheim 1 it seemed the only rider who was willing to give it his all against Stewart and Reed was Reed's former team-mate Ryan Dungey and he gave Stewart all he could handle before winning the next two rounds. But after Stewart was officially out, announced the day before the San Francisco SX, all of a sudden a handful more riders were mixing it up at the front of the pack.

Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Ryan Dungey grabs the holeshot to start the San Fran Main and he's chased valiantly by Honda Red Bull Racing's Davi Millsaps, Stewart's San Manuel Yamaha team-mate Josh Hill and Monster Energy Kawasaki's Ryan Villopoto. Villopoto takes nearly half the race to get around Hill who is doing his best impression of a road block and in the meantime Millsaps hits the dirt and remounts in fourth.

Once Villopoto is by for second he's still way too far behind Dungey to do anything about his lead but that's when Dungey feels generous and tosses it away over a triple in a rhythm lane. Although he's back up quickly his bike is severely bent

up and Villopoto takes the win over Hill, Millsaps and then Dungey in fourth.

Then comes San Diego where Monster Energy Kawasaki's replacement rider Nick Wey grabs the holeshot after Dungey crashes in the first turn, taking Rockstar/Canidae Suzuki's Tommy Hahn and Villopoto with him. Millsaps, who showed his first spark of life the week before, takes two laps to get around Wey and into the lead and he takes off, leading the rest of the Main Event for his first win of the season. Hill finishes second for the third time in a row over Valli Motorsports Yamaha's Ivan Tedesco. Villopoto recovers for an astounding fourth place over JGR/Toyota/Muscle Milk Yamaha's Justin Brayton and then Dungey and Hahn.

At the third and final race at Anaheim's Angel Stadium, Villopoto decides to see what he can do with a start. He grabs the holeshot and leads the entire Main Event with ease, winning over Hill, GEICO Powersports Honda's Kevin Windham, Dungey (who has a fall) and Millsaps. The pattern is developing where it's Hill, Dungey, Villopoto, Windham and Millsaps who are the consistent front-runners...

The series heads east out of California to Indianapolis for round one of the Lites East and round seven of the 450cc title chase. Josh Hill, by virtue of four consecutive runner-up finishes, sits tied atop the points standings with Dungey with Villopoto only three points behind. Indy is an extremely slippery circuit which should play into the hands of someone like Windham.





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Justin Barcia gets buckwild off the start in Atlanta



French flyer Christophe Pourcel leads the East Coast Lites after two rounds with a perfect 50-point haul

LITES SABRES!

WEIMER AND POURCEL SLICE THROUGH THEIR 250F RIVALS

Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Jake Weimer seemed invincible. After three rounds of racing he'd won all of his heat races and all of the Main Events in the West Coast Lites series. But while he was dominating, GEICO Powersports Honda's Trey Canard was figuring things out.

While Weimer wins the heat race in San Francisco, Canard grabs the holeshot in the Main Event and even with Weimer right behind him the whole time Canard slowly begins to pull away to secure his first victory of the season. Weimer hangs on for second place and still enjoys a pretty massive points lead over Canard and the rest of the field as they head into San Diego.

Canard pulls another holeshot in San Diego but this time Weimer is less willing to let him run around out front and on the first lap he dives inside of Canard into a right-hand 180-degree turn and Canard goes down, purely on his own, as he just pushes too hard into the corner to try and prevent the inevitable Weimer pass. Canard remounts in 19th and begins moving forward while Weimer runs away – for a while.

Weimer is joined at the front of the pack by young Brit Max Anstie who, at 16 years old, looks mature beyond his years on the motorcycle as he challenges Weimer for the lead. At one point Anstie even passes the veteran only for Weimer to shut the door but with three laps to go Anstie is blocked by Jeff Alessi – a fellow Yamaha rider – and on the final lap, in a last-ditch attempt to catch Weimer, Anstie goes down handing second place to Lucas Oil/TLD Honda's Cole Seely and third to Seely's team-mate Wil Hahn.

Anstie finishes fourth in front of his own team-mate Broc Tickle and Canard who finds his way all the way back up to sixth.

At this point the series really seems over but while Weimer is dominant, he's not perfect. Hahn grabs the holeshot in Anaheim and Canard is quickly by and into the lead. As he pulls away Weimer tries to fight his way into second, only to wash out the front end on a tricky off-camber. He's up quickly but has a hard time starting his bike and he doesn't get back going again until he is

absolutely dead last with only 11 laps left to run.

Canard leads the rest of the race with apparent ease over Tickle and Hahn while Weimer catches all the way back up to eighth, only a flicker of a second off of sixth place. With the East Coast starting up, the West goes on hiatus and Weimer enjoys a 14-point lead over Canard with only two rounds left to run.

As the Lites East kicks off, many are wondering about the health of defending champion Christophe Pourcel of the Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team and about the skill of 17-year-old Justin Barcia of the GEICO Powersports Honda team. At round one the fans have their questions answered.

Pourcel is fine as he cruises his way from a holeshot to a win at round one while but Barcia is fast but ragged. Barcia starts second then falls, remounts fourth and then passes Ryan Sipes on the last lap for third while Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Austin Stroupe manages a second place.

At round two in Atlanta Pourcel looks much less dominant. His team-mate Dean Wilson grabs the holeshot over Stroupe, Pourcel, Blake Baggett, Brett Metcalfe and Barcia but Pourcel seems more interested in messing with Barcia than going after the leader. As Barcia catches Pourcel, the Frenchman begins to run him wide in the turns, eventually taking the youngster down. But Barcia is back up quickly and not only catches – but passes – Pourcel for second place before falling again while chasing down leader Stroupe.

This time Barcia damages his front brake and he struggles and finishes a lap down. After Barcia departs the front of the pack Pourcel begins to pick up steam until he catches Stroupe the next lap and then Stroupe falls, handing Pourcel the lead and the win. Stroupe hangs on for second while Metcalfe, Wilson and Baggett round out the top five.

So after two rounds Pourcel holds only a six-point lead on Stroupe but it's Barcia that has the toughest luck, losing a ton of points in the championship hunt. As they say, you can't win the title in one round but you can lose it and Barcia may have done that in Atlanta.

SERIES STANDINGS

SUPERCROSS >>

1	Ryan Dungey	170 points
2	Josh Hill	150
3	Ryan Villopoto	147
4	Davi Millsaps	134
5	Justin Brayton	121
6	Ivan Tedesco	115
7	Kevin Windham	113
8	Nick Wey	85
9	Michael Byrne	71
10	Andrew Short	69

LITES WEST >>

1	Jake Weimer	135 points
2	Trey Canard	121
3	Wil Hahn	114
4	Broc Tickle	100
5	Blake Wharton	89
6	Cole Seely	76
7	Max Anstie	63
8	Josh Hansen	60
9	Phillip Nicoletti	56
10	Jeff Alessi	56

LITES EAST >>

1	Christophe Pourcel	50 points
2	Austin Stroupe	44
3	Brett Metcalfe	36
4	Dean Wilson	33
5	Blake Baggett	26
6	Ryan Sipes	24
7	Kyle Regal	24
8	Justin Barcia	23
9	Jake Moss	22
10	Nico Izzi	22



Class newbie Ryan Dungey has a 20-point lead in the big bike division

Millsaps grabs the start from the outside and Windham is quickly on his tail but it takes K-Dub three laps to complete a pass on Millsaps for the lead and by then he has the two Ryans – Villopoto and Dungey – breathing down his neck. Windham leads the first 11 laps but eventually Villopoto picks up on his lines and makes a move past the veteran and Dungey follows suit. However, Dungey has nothing for Villopoto who takes the win but Hill is almost the story of the day as he struggles throughout the race to finish in the middle of the pack in ninth, losing a lot of valuable points.

Heading into Atlanta, Dungey is still tied atop the points standings but this time it's with Villopoto who has won three of the four previous events, his only loss coming when Dungey knocked him down in the first turn at San Diego.

With the pressure on in the Main Event, Dungey grabs a much-needed holeshot and begins to check out in front of Trey Canard, who's filling in on a 450 for Andrew Short at Honda Red Bull Racing. It takes

Villopoto a couple of laps to find his way by the fellow ginger and after he makes it past he begins making up time on Dungey until the halfway point when Villopoto goes over the bars violently in a rhythm section trying to find his way by a lapper.

When he gets up, Villopoto is unable to restart his KX450F for over a lap before he realises the exhaust is packed with dirt from the crash. He finishes 19th while Dungey takes the win and Canard finishes second in his second-ever 450cc race. Millsaps grabs third over Tedesco, Brayton and Hill who crashed hard in practice but rides through the pain.

And just like that – after two weekends in a row of sitting tied in the points standings – Ryan Dungey now leads the series by 20 points over Hill and 23 over Villopoto before the halfway race at Daytona. Villopoto and Hill both still believe they can beat him but do they believe they can beat Stewart or Reed? We may find out as soon as Daytona where the Thunder From Down Under is rumoured to be returning...



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Trey Canard leads Jake Weimer – the position is reversed in the points standings but that could all change when the series heads out west again

COAST TO COAST!

TREY CANARD'S A TITLE CONTENDER FOR THE WEST COAST LITES CROWN BUT RIGHT NOW HE'S MIXING IT WITH THE 450 MEN IN THE EAST...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

Trey Canard burst onto the scene as a fast youngster who overcame a lot to become a professional motocrosser and in his rookie year he won the 250 East series and ran up front in the Nationals. It was supposed to get easier and easier for the friendly, outgoing kid but it got a lot harder the next year. Injuries and lacklustre riding ended up producing no wins for Canard and going into his third season he had to make a statement.

After starting off slow in the West Coast Lites series he caught fire and with two wins under his belt he finds himself only 14 points down with two races left. That wasn't the best part though as with Andrew Short's injury he finds himself now promoted to the 450 class while the big bikes are racing in the East. I spoke to him after his rough first round and then followed up after his first podium in Atlanta.

DBR: Trey, talk about how the first round on the 450 went for you.

TC: "It was a pretty rough weekend, really. Practice went okay but I just rode kind of timid – I only had three days on the bike which I thought would be enough since I felt pretty good since day one. I thought I did pretty decent in practice. I was eighth overall which was not bad, it was a second off the really fast guys. I thought that was pretty decent for my first practice.

"In the heat race it didn't seem like anything was going right. I got held up with RV and Davi in the first turn then one person crashed in front of me and I landed off the track then Kyle Partridge crashed in front of me. I managed to get into the Main Event which was good and then I just got a terrible run off the gate, I spun like crazy.

"I was pretty much dead last and I was having some trouble getting around some people. I almost looped out when I lost a hand off the bar and went straight into the triple face. Luckily I didn't get catapulted over the triple with one hand on the bar. It broke the bike and bent my bars. I tried to get back on but there was anti-freeze everywhere so I thought it was time to put it away. It was a bummer because I feel like I'm capable of more – I think I can be really smooth on the 450."

DBR: What are your thoughts on the 450 class?

Has anything surprised you?

TC: "It's pretty crazy but I never got a stab at the front of the pack. It's all pretty similar, just different bikes. The 450 in general, you have to be so patient with it. Probably the biggest thing for me is to ride the bike aggressively but not just be wide open on the throttle."

DBR: Physically how did you feel? Does the bigger bike wear you out a little bit?

TC: "No, I think I was just timid, definitely in practice I was timid. The track was probably not the best track to start on a 450. It had some really technical stuff on it and the whoops were huge. I was just timid overall about everything.

"In the heat race I did fine physically and I felt like I was doing great in the Main physically so I don't think it was an issue. If I get a good start I feel like I could do some damage. Not that I could go out there and win the thing but I feel like I can run with those front guys if everything goes right. My goal right now is just to gain some experience and learn some things."

DBR: With you being in the title hunt in the West 250s were you surprised when you got the call?

TC: "Yeah, I was real surprised. At the time when I got the call I was 25 points down so it was kind of a shock – I didn't know what to say right away. I thought back to Dungey in '08 and he was only five points down from Lawrence. For me, I'm a racer and I feel like the more I race the more experience I gain and I think this will help me when I go back to the 250s. It's a good thing and as long as I can keep a good attitude about things and not get down about weekends like this one it will all be good."

DBR: So, are you going to race the rest of the 450 rounds?

TC: "I think it's until Dallas or Jacksonville and it depends on how things are going. If I do race through Jacksonville that will give me four complete weeks to get ready for Seattle. It will be good to have some 20-lap Main Events under my belt. Hopefully I can get a little bit of confidence out

of this deal. I think that has been what's helped Jake so much this year, he really feels like he should be up there winning."

DBR: Let's talk about your 250 season. Did Jake's speed catch you off guard?

TC: "I thought my speed was good, at A1 I was right there. Then in Phoenix I had some trouble with my ankle and that was a rough race. At A2 I had the fastest lap in the Main Event and San Francisco was a good race for me. In San Diego I just made a stupid mistake which cost me and A3 was another good Main."

DBR: So in this short series and with Weimer taking advantage of every break he got you're sitting 14 points down. You feel like you can still do it right? I mean, anything can happen...

TC: "I don't think it's an unobtainable goal – I need to think about going and putting in solid races and that's all I can control. I can't control what he does, I can't control anything other than the fact that I need to go out there and get a good start and put in a solid 15 laps and whatever happens happens."

We then caught up to Trey after Atlanta where he rode up front and solidly all night to finish second in his second ever 450 ride.

DBR: Congrats Trey, how do you feel about your second tonight?

TC: "Oh man, it's great. I love it. Words can't express how good I feel right now. It was an awesome race and I really just got a good start and stayed on it for 20 laps. I could see Davi catching me but I thought I could hold him off to the end and I did."

DBR: Now obviously Honda are looking at you for a spot on the team in 2011. This has to help, right?

TC: "Yeah, for sure. I mean, those guys have been awesome for me and I have to thank them for everything. I'd like to stay on a Honda next year, I hope we can work something out!"





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TRAINING DAY!

IS IT POSSIBLE TO TEACH AN OLD DAWG NEW TRICKS? IT IS IF YOUR NAME'S NEIL PRINCE AND YOU'RE HEAD COACH AT THE CAS HONDA TRAINING SCHOOL...

Words by **Sutty**

When I started racing motocross back in 1989 – yeah, that's probably before some of you were even born – the fastest kid in my area was a nipper named Neil Prince. Looking super-slick in his Honda Britain team-issue Answer racewear, the then 16-year-old from Wrexham dominated the youth scene that year and even came close to scoring a GP point – amid some controversy about whether he had the correct licence or not – in his 125cc world championship debut at Hawkstone Park. Five years after that Neil tied up the British 125cc championship title at the same circuit and would be there or thereabouts at the front of the domestic pack for the rest of his racing career.

Following a pretty nasty get off at the opening round of the British champs in 2003 and with an ever increasing workload as a key member of the CAS management team, Neil more or less hung up his boots and concentrated on the behind-the-scenes running of Britain's most successful MX1 team instead. As well as organising logistics and stuff, one of Neil's most important roles at CAS includes the development of the team's riders which is something he's proved pretty darn good at – look at the meteoric improvement Bry Mac made last year for instance and how surprising was the pace of Evgeny Bobryshev at the Maxxis season opener?

So with all that in mind when I got the invitation to go spend a day with Neil at one of the CAS Honda Training Schools held at the rather excellent Thoresway Motoparc facility in Lincolnshire I quickly said yes so I could see if the Prince of Wales could teach this old Dawg some new tricks as well.

In my mind the reason motocross is the most awesome sport in the world is because of all the diversity involved and that means it's not possible to follow a textbook to success. Of course there are certain guidelines that should be closely followed but with humans coming in all shapes, sizes and mindsets the best way to make a motocross rider better is to work with the tools and skills they have rather than get totally hung up on style and such. My point is partially proven if you look at the way three of the fastest motocross riders in recent history – Ricky Carmichael, Stefan Everts and Antonio Cairoli – go about doing what they do. For that reason I believe that training schools that concentrate completely on elbow position and body-on-bike placement are a total waste of time and money – luckily the CAS Honda Training School is far from being either.

Rather than wasting time re-teaching everyone the basic fundamentals of how to nail one particular obstacle at a time Neil breaks down the circuit into zones and works towards making each and every pupil faster through each zone by working on improving their technique, line selection and mental

attitude towards it.

For example the school I attended started with a lesson on a section of track that featured a straight with two tabletops that lead into a bermed left-hand corner followed by a short step-down that immediately turned into a cambered right-left s-bend that then opened up into a long left-hander. I'd guesstimate it as only being a 20-second section of the whole circuit but one that it's possible to pick up good time on or lose a load if you feck it up.

With the emphasis on good track craft Neil showed us a couple of ways to skin this particular cat before breaking down the techniques involved in both as well as giving good reasoning as to why what was done and when so it's not just a case of monkey see, monkey do.

Then after watching the master at work it was our turn to give it a go. If anyone was struggling with one particular aspect Neil would pull them to one side and iron out their problem while still being available to answer any questions or queries anyone else had. Following that the group would then discuss any issues or improvements made which might not seem all that important but was actually quite helpful to make it all sink in.

I think it's pretty safe to say everyone got faster in this section – no times were taken but I'm certain improvements ranged from a few 10ths of a second upwards. Considering this particular zone only made up about 10 per cent of the overall circuit if each rider were able to save a fraction of a second in each zone Neil coached us in the savings would be immense.

Throughout the day we covered six separate zones and within those covered the correct techniques for flat, bermed, rutted and off-camber corners, a variety of different jumps, pre-jumping, accelerating, braking and of course starting – so that's pretty much everything. More importantly though everyone learned lots about line selection and how to link the full circuit together to enable us all to pop in quicker lap times which at the end of the day is what this sport is all about.

All in all I'd say I had a pretty good day out and learned plenty so if you want to be a quicker, smoother and safer racer you could do a lot worse than invest in a CAS Honda Training School that will be running at various venues around the country this summer. If you go into the school with a good attitude and an open mind I guarantee you'll come away as a much better rider.

• Big thanks to Mark Reville at Thoresway Motoparc (www.thoresway-motoparc.co.uk) for the loan of his own personal CRF450 for the day and also for providing a mega track for this particular school. The Thoresway circuit is located near Caistor in Lincolnshire and is frickin' awesome. Give Mark a yell on **07791 573241** for opening times...



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Old Dawg, new tricks? After 20 years in the sport Suttly still reckons he benefited from the CAS Honda school



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JD ON THE ROCKS?

COMING INTO THE 2010 SEASON IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THERE WOULD BE A JASON DOUGAN-SHAPED GAP ON THE STARTGATE AS THE 22-YEAR-OLD STRUGGLED TO FIND A DEAL AND EVEN CONTEMPLATED RETIREMENT. THEN STEVE DIXON CAME TO HIS RESCUE...

WORDS BY MARK TURNER PHOTOS BY SUTTY



profile

Coming into the 2010 season Jason Dougan was a man with a lot on his mind

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Last year Doogs achieved a personal goal by finishing top 20 in the MX1 world championship



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FIRST IMPRESSIONS >>

With the British championship kicking off at Little Silver what fortunes did it bring for Jason?

"My day didn't go too bad though we did have a slight hick up in qualifying as we forgot to put the transponder on the bike and only realised with five minutes remaining on the clock. Luckily I managed to put in a late lap to get me seventh which wasn't too bad considering..."

"In the first moto I got a bad jump out of the gate and ended up hitting Swordy who had gone down in front of me. I was more or less dead last but managed to work my way back up to sixth – I was happy with that as the track was very difficult for passing sometimes, it was more of a case of waiting for the guy in front to make a mistake to get by.

"Moto two went better – I got a decent start and was closer to the front and battled with Swordy for most of the race. By now the track was getting really gnarly and for the last couple of laps I suffered with armpump but still managed a fifth place finish.

"I ended moto three in sixth owing to making a few silly mistakes but overall I was fairly happy with how it went – I felt I showed good speed and now know where I need to work to improve and I know we can still improve on the bike. I was aiming for three solid rides which I feel I produced and it's given us now a good solid base to work from."



In action at Little Silver – the Bike It Cosworth Yamaha rider had a solid start to the season

His one-year deal at CCM over and the chances of an extension to his contract looking pretty slim, at the back end of 2009 Jason Dougan was on the hunt for a new employer. With budgets being squeezed due to the crappy economic climate, securing a ride with a new team wasn't going to be easy but, then again, Doogs was coming off the back of a fairly successful season that had seen him grab seventh in the British championship and 20th in the world.

The PR machine and internet forums kept us constantly up-to-date as riders headed to new teams but the Dougan camp remained strangely quiet. Then news started to filter through that Jason – who at this point still had yet to secure a ride – was considering either taking a year out from the sport or even calling it a day altogether. Now for a professional sportsman who, don't forget, was still only 22 that's a bold statement to make but there were a lot of different factors involved that didn't help the situation...

"It was something I'd never thought about

before but I did give some thought to it at one point. Basically, I thought my deal for 2010 was pretty much sorted. I was told I had a ride – I'm not going to mention team names or even individuals but I thought everything was sorted. I would be the second rider to someone they were still in discussions with. Then for some unknown reason things took a bizarre twist.

"My phone calls were being ignored and I never heard anything from them since, still haven't to this day. In fact I pretty much found out I no longer had a deal when I heard they had signed two other riders! I guess it would have been nice to know so I at least I would have had the chance to sort something else out but, whatever, that's motocross for you I guess!

"It was almost December and I had nothing. I was starting to get stressed with the situation – there pretty much wasn't the rides anymore, everything seemed to be done and dusted. So the thought of giving up was there if only for a short while. It wasn't something I wanted to make public – there was something about it on mxlarge

but I had nothing to do with it.

"At the end of the day all I want to do is race my bike and enjoy myself, I'm not big on making a fuss or trying to make people feel sorry for me. Trouble is I'm an all or nothing kind of person – I felt unless I could do the job properly then I didn't want to race just to make up the numbers. I love riding my bike and would never stop doing that but racing? Racing's different. Thankfully it's all good now so I can move forward and enjoy myself at the races."

But back in December the clock was ticking and Jason found himself heading into a month where traditionally winter training programmes are up and running for most riders and he didn't even have a ride. Still, despite all this uncertainty, Jason stayed motivated and cracked on with his preparations for 2010.

"If anything it's made me more motivated to go out there and show these people what I can do – whenever I think about it I get fired up! The only way to make myself feel satisfied about the whole situation is to go out and do the >>



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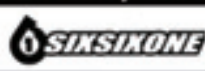


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HOMEBOY!

DOOGS' DOMESTIC DIARY >>

"I think the new format is a good idea – it's going to be different and something that not many of us are used to. I also think it will make for better racing and be a lot more exciting for the spectators.

Obviously with the extra moto I've had to adjust my training slightly – mainly by doing sprint motos – but my dad has a good programme set out for me and it's working really well.

"As far as rivals are concerned, there are a lot of fast guys out there – also guys that aren't necessary the fastest but are always consistent, these are the guys that are going to be hard to beat in a championship. But the mains rivals are going to be Brad, Nunny, Swordy and Swanepoel.

"It was kind of my idea not to ride GPs this year. I feel I've had my chance. I've raced them now for five years and in 2009 I reached a goal I'd set out to achieve and that was to finish in the top 20 in the championship in my first season in MX1.

"I think taking a year out so to speak will be a good move for me, I've done them since I was 17 and have had some good races and enjoyable times but I feel in order for me to progress even more and bring myself on a year out was the best thing for me – downsize to a domestic championship and try something new. New challenges so to speak. Hopefully it'll give me the confidence boost to be able to ride like I'm able to then in 2011 if everything goes well I'll give it another shot.

"The domestic championships here in the UK aren't easy and the talent throughout is very strong, they just doesn't have the depth the GPs do but that doesn't make them easier by any means. Brad's a prime example. He never raced the GPs last year and I'd say he's faster now than in the years when he did them."



business and if I can finish where I aim to be then I think it'll leave a couple of people feeling a tad gutted. But only time will tell."

Jason had spoken to CCM about carrying his deal over for 2010 but after these talks came to nothing and then his other 'mystery' deal fell through he turned to his former team boss for advice. "I spoke with my good friend Mark Chamberlain at MVR-D Suzuki who I've rode for for most of my career and he did say he would try and help in any way he could if something didn't come up which was a step in the right direction."

Then came the break Jason was looking for – a meeting with Steve Dixon, team owner of Bike It Cosworth Yamaha. "I've rode for Steve in the past and I'm pretty fortunate that his workshops are based only 15 minutes from my house so my dad and I took a trip over to his place one evening. Initially he wasn't planning to run a 450 rider as all his focus is with MX2 but he was good enough to give me a shot and managed to put something together for me which

obviously I'm really grateful for.

"We'll be just doing the domestic championships – Maxis and Red Bull Pro Nationals – and if possible the British and French GPs. If I can ride like I know I can then I can't see why I shouldn't be winning races and be a contender for the championships."

So with a ride finally sorted Jason could now focus all his efforts into getting both bike and body dialled in for 2010. Next stop America...

"I flew out to South Carolina on January 3 to stay with my new team-mate Zach Osborne. His place is in the middle of nowhere, something new to me being a city boy! Man, the nearest shop was a 15-minute drive away although it wasn't such a bad thing as the only thing to keep us occupied was to either go training or riding. Zach and myself work really well together – he came to train with me and dad a few times before we planned the America trip and we seemed to push each other well.

"His tracks are deep sand. And don't get graded! We rode four days a week. Kenneth

Gundersen was good enough to let me join in with Zach and follow their programme, it's not something I've done before but it seemed to work really well for me. The weather then turned on us so we moved down to Florida with Zach again for a week.

"We stayed with Ed Allingham [another new rider with the Dixon team] at his place and rode some awesome tracks. The new 450 Yamaha is awesome – I can't fault it in the slightest. The power is instant – faster than anything I've ridden ever before! And the turning and handling are spot on, I really feel comfortable on it.

"Originally I was due to return home on February 4 but decided to stay an extra 10 days as the weather back home wasn't the best. Going over has helped me no end in my preparations. I have never rode so much before a start of a season as I have this year, plus it's the first time I'm coming into a season not carrying an injury from the previous year so I can't wait for the racing to begin."



For 2010 Jason will be focusing his attention on the two main domestic championships



Speedy Spaniard Jon Barragan is one of Kawasaki's main hopes for GP glory this season

SEVENTH HEAVEN?

AFTER SIX REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL YEARS PROMOTING THE FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, YOUTHSTREAM ARE GOING ALL-OUT TO MAKE THE 2010 SERIES THEIR BEST EVER – HERE'S A FULL RUNDOWN OF WHO AND WHAT'S HOT AND WHATNOT...

Words by Suttty Photos by Sarah Gutierrez

If you're a believer in that kind of stuff magical things really do happen at Easter – like bunnies delivering chocolate eggs and that. Although I do believe in chocolate I don't believe in the Easter Bunny, watching reruns of bad films or listening to bad jokes (speaking of which – how do you know where the Easter Bunny has been? Eggs marks the spot. Boom, boom!) so instead of staying in the UK for Britain's second favourite religious holiday I'm gonna be headed to Bulgaria to support something that I do believe in – the FIM Motocross World Championship.

This year's championship chases kick off next month at Selevio – the circuit the Bulgarian's proclaim to be 'The Best Motocross Track in the World' – and with a plethora of genuine title contenders ready to rock in each class it's promising to be an exciting year as men and machines do battle through 30 mind-blowing 35-minute plus two-lap wars. All of which adds up to around 20 hours of exciting bar-to-bar action for the MX1 and MX2 troops and a little less for the ladies...

Reigning MX1 world champion Antonio Cairoli has to start as firm favourite to recapture his crown in 2010, even after switching to unfamiliar factory KTM machinery following six years spent riding the wheels off Yamahas. It's still uncertain whether he'll race a 350 or 450cc bike, although it's not unimaginable to think of him winning on whatever weapon he decides to roll up on – both he and the two bikes really are that good.

While the MX1 class is stacked with talent (it's easy to name a dozen riders in with a shout of winning a moto – eight actually did win one or

more in 2009) the biggest threats to stop Cairoli from winning world championship number four have to be his KTM team-mate Max Nagl, Teka Suzuki's new signing Clement Desalle or fellow Italian stallion David Philippaerts who straight up beat Cairoli at an Italian championship round held at former GP venue Castiglione del Lago t'other weekend.

Philippaerts already knows what it takes to win a world title but after a disappointing and shaky defence in '09 he's a super-keen jelly bean and firmly focussed on regaining that hugely important #1 plate this time around. Armed with the all-new factory YZF450 that DP19 claims is "lighter and more responsive", the 25-year-old enters the season in tip-top condition after a winter spent training in the mountains near his home in Italy.

Another rider coming into the season firing on all cylinders is Germany's Max Nagl. Max is an out and out big-bore specialist and rides the 450 KTM to its full potential using all the low-end grunt and torque the Austrian engineers can extract from their awesome powerplant. And because Max rides so smooth and precisely they're able to give him a ridiculously powerful motor – one that most riders would tie themselves in knots with – and that means he always has plenty of power on tap which enables him to get great starts. Using those good starts to his advantage, Max lead more than twice as many laps as anyone else last year – that's including Cairoli who won more motos – and if he keeps on improving as he has been this could be the year that he finally lives up to the hype that surrounded him as a teenager.

While Nagl's rise to the top has been slow and steady Clement Desalle's has been rapid and raucous. The explosive Belgian seems to have little respect for any of his rivals and after speedily rising through the ranks from 25th four years ago to third last season, the racer from Gouy-lez-Pieton who is still only 20 years old looks in great shape to challenge for the title in 2010. Riding an immaculately prepared factory Teka Suzuki direct from the legendary GRP MX outfit, Desalle will be paired up with two-time world champion Steve Ramon who obviously also knows a thing or two about winning. Despite being one of the eight riders to win a moto in '09 Ramon remains one of the most underrated athletes in the sport and probably isn't considered by most pundits to be a serious title threat in 2010. But as one of the most stylish, functional, creative and consistent riders to ever swing a leg over a motocross machine you'd have to be a bit daft to think that he won't be right up there at the pointy end come the end of the season when all the points are added up.

Less consistent riders who are all bound to feature at one point or another are KRT's Seb Pourcel and Jon Barragan, Ricci Racing's Ken De Dycker and LS Motors' Tanel Leok. All four won motos in '09 and should be thereabouts again this year. Also in the mix for regular top 10 appearances should be Josh Coppins on the twin-cylinder Aprilia, Gareth Swanepoel who joins the highly-motivated CAS Honda squad for 2010 and quite possibly battling Brits Tom Church and Stephen Sword.

Church was the UK's leading MX1 GP rider last year and comes into the 2010

>>



Livia Lancelot will aim to regain her title on a KTM in 2010

SPEED QUEENS!

THE WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPS...

With races spread right the way across Europe – Sevlievo (Bulgaria), Valkenswaard (Netherlands), Agueda (Portugal), Bellpuig (Spain), St Jean d'Angely (France), Loket (Czech Republic) and Mantova (Italy) – and with more strong contenders than ever, the 2010 Women's World Championship is shaping up to be the best yet.

KTM's Steffi Laier returns to defend the crown she sensationally snatched from Livia Lancelot in 2009 after the French femme-fatale injured a knee mid-season. Livia will be hoping to bounce back in 2010 and then there are a bunch of up n' comers who are more than ready to launch an attack too so Steffi's definitely gonna have her hands full. What makes the women's title chase particularly interesting this year is the fact that five of the top six title contenders will all be on KTM machinery as Lancelot, Natalie Kane, Maria Franke and Elin Mann all join Laier on the Austrian brand's bikes. The fifth member of the scorching six – Larissa Papenmeier – stays on Suzuki while Italian wildcard Chiara Fontanesi trades in her 125cc two-smoker for a 250F Yamaha.

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Defending MX1 champion Antonio Cairoli starts the GP campaign as favourite



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RACES IN PLACES

THE 2010 MXGP SUPER SCHEDULE >>>

ROUND 1 – SEVLIEVO, BULGARIA, APRIL 4

The Bulgarians claim that the venue for the opening GP of the year is the world's best motocross circuit and they might just be right! Sevlievo has some massive jumps, huge climbs and long fast descents and that makes it one of the more viewer-friendly circuits on the GP calendar although the atmosphere is sometimes lacking as the Bulgarian crowd is normally quite sparse. If you fancy visiting one of the world's most up-to-date motocross facilities in an old-school eastern European setting then Sevlievo is well worth the trip!

ROUND 2 – MANTOVA, ITALY, APRIL 11

Right on the edge of town and surrounded by tennis courts and sports fields, Mantova is a strange setting for an MX GP but regardless of that fact this excellent little circuit makes a welcome return to the GP schedule to host the second round after a year off. Perennial home of the pre-season Starcross race, the supercross-style circuit with its sandy base is surprisingly tough on bikes and bodies but at the same time makes for some great action for spectators. With the series starting to warm up nicely this is gonna be one awesome event packed out with partisan fans who know how to have a great time at the races.

ROUND 3 – VALKENSWAARD, NETHERLANDS, APRIL 25

Situated just south of Eindhoven in the North Brabant area of Holland, the Valkenswaard circuit is in the epicentre of the motocross community with the legendary GP tracks of Lommel and Lierop just a stone's throw away. However unlike those sandpits that are – elevation wise – as flat as a pancake, Valkenswaard is a bit of a rarity as it's a typically deep Dutch sand track that atypically features a hill or two – albeit man-made ones! Getting there is easy with the closest airport being Eindhoven – Ryanair and VLM Airlines both fly there from the UK. It's also well worth looking at flying into Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport and hiring a car or even driving across from the UK – contact Billy Nutt at www.nutttravel.com for killer deals on ferry crossings.

ROUND 4 – AGUEDA, PORTUGAL, MAY 9

The Portuguese round of the series seems to be popular with British fans who annually flock to the Agueda circuit that's famous for its big jumps, elevation changes and bright red sandy soil. Overall viewing is good and the amphitheatre setting creates a great atmosphere with the fans – many of whom camp out in the adjacent woods. Agueda is not a million miles from either the Porto or Lisbon airports and is close to the beautiful Atlantic coast too which makes the Portuguese round an excellent excuse for a spring break!

ROUND 5 – BELLPUIG, SPAIN, MAY 16

Perhaps not quite as exciting a circuit as Talavera was, the new home of the Spanish GP is an excellently prepared and exciting circuit that offers good facilities, great racing and decent viewing. Set in the north east of the country in the Catalan region of Spain that's famous for its custardy desserts, this fast hillside circuit is easy to reach from both the Girona and Barcelona airports.

ROUND 6 – CHEPSTOW, WALES, MAY 30

It's less than three months to go until the British GP and we still know next to bugger all about the venue apart from Youthstream have now confirmed it will be at Chepstow, somewhere better known for its gee-gee racecourse. We're pretty sure Gareth Hockey and his RHL Activities team ain't planning to lay out a circuit based entirely around two sweeping left-hand hairpins linked by a couple of straights so they're most likely starting from scratch but let's remember that the Welshman has a knack of making things happen one way or another – even if he does take a financial fisting in the process.

ROUND 7 – ST JEAN D'ANGELY, FRANCE, JUNE 6

Another epic hillside French race track that creates some awesome racing and also seems to suit the Brits who always do quite well here! St Jean d'Angely is a great facility with plenty of good viewing that gets packed out by a very vocal and ever enthusiastic crowd so the atmosphere is usually great. If you're a bit of a history buff I'd recommend flying into Limoges airport with Ryan Air and taking a few hours to visit nearby Oradour-sur-Glane – a small town which remains pretty much untouched since 1944 as a memorial to its inhabitants who were massacred by German troops during WW2.

ROUND 8 – TEUTSCHENTHAL, GERMANY, JUNE 20

Teutschenthal is one of the finer circuits for spectators in GP motocross as this tight, hardpack circuit is packed full of elevation changes and jumps! Situated in the east of the country, the facility still has an old communist charm to it and is infamous for its monster beer tent and Saturday night party that one year kept Joel Smets awake until he pulled the plug on the generator! If you're a fan of great motocross, beer and sausage then this is one not to miss! Fly in to Leipzig Airport then head west to Halle – Teutschenthal is just a stone's throw further!



Frenchman Marvin Musquin dominated MX2 last season and will be tough to beat in 2010



Clement Desalle's stellar rides in '09 earned him a place on the factory Teka Suzuki team

© suzuki-racing.com

season on a high after a tough winter spent training and testing with his new CCM team-mate Sword. The Scotsman meanwhile had a disappointing run at the title in his last year of MX2 competition and will be looking to make waves as he returns to the class in which he last raced four years ago. The pugnacious pair will be racing revamped CMX450s that should also be a much more competitive machine than last year right from the get-go so things are looking positive for Britain's sole representatives in this year's MX1 world championships.

In the MX2 division it's pretty safe to say that one of the following five riders will take the title come the end of the year – the big question is out of Marvin Musquin, Ken Roczen, Shaun Simpson, Gautier Paulin and Steven Frossard which one will it be?

Provided he can stay injury free all year long only a fool would bet against the reigning MX2 world champ Marvin Musquin from recapturing his crown. The 20-year-old Frenchman's already proved he's on it this year with a string of strong rides in the major pre-season internationals on his all-new factory bike and it's also worth remembering how dominant he was after switching to the orange brand midway through the 2009 GP season – amazingly scoring an average of 22.25 points for each moto he started (and remember he lost 25 with a mechanical DNF in Czecho)!

The other rider who's globally tipped for glory in 2010 is Teka Suzuki's 15-year-old sensation Ken Roczen. A late starter in the 2009 series – he missed the first four rounds because he was simply too young to compete! – Ken went on to win motos in Uddevalla and Loket as well as take the overall at his home GP in Teutschenthal. With added support from Sylvain Geboers' awesome factory Suzuki set-up and a year of GP experience behind him Roczen could well be the boy to take this year's title.

After leading the '09 MX2 championship in the early part of the season – and running a close second behind Musquin until he self-destructed at the final two GPs of the year – former BMX world champion Gautier Paulin is another of the fancied runners for 2010 despite only having raced motocross for around six-and-a-half years. Changing from Kawasaki to Yamaha equipment in the off-season seems to have done the Frenchman no harm at all and the almost 20-year-old seems particularly refreshed and invigorated after his Stateside SX sabbatical – look out for particularly strong performances from the #21 pilot at the more hardpack races this summer.

Steven Frossard's the third Frenchman considered to be in with a good

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Britain's best hopes for a world crown rest on the strong Scottish shoulders of Shaun 'Woody' Simpson



Red Bull KTM's Max Nagl is a natural big-bore rider and should figure in MX1

shout of capturing the crown although the 22-year-old resident of Marseille will have to knock it up a notch in 2010 if he's going to take the title after an up and down '09 season on the CLS Kawasaki. While Frossard won a maiden moto in Bulgaria and another in Germany he failed to score any points at all in around a third of the series' races – if he wants to be MX2 world champion before he ages out that sort of all-or-nothing attitude will have to change.

And that takes us to Shaun Simpson... Hellishly unlucky not to already have a world title in the bag after that horrifying practice crash ended his '09 season just as it was picking up momentum, the Simpson of 2010 – who we're possibly gonna call Woody from this point on due to his uncanny likeness to the rootin' tootin' cowboy star of the Toy Story trilogy – looks way faster and way more focussed than ever before. Armed with the best factory machinery available and with the full support of his family let's keep everything crossed as Shaun goes all-out to capture his first world championship title.

Other Brits lining up for MX2 glory include HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK team-mates Jake Nicholls and Graeme Irwin as well as Bike It Cosworth Yamaha teamster Mel Pocock. Steve Dixon's squad will also be running US import Zach Osborne who's getting better and better all the time and is a threat to win races on any given day. Unfortunately – for one reason or another – Zach's been unable to show any real consistency in his pro career so far but I know the enigmatic Ewok-a-likey enjoys nothing better than serving me up a red hot dish of STFU so maybe 2010 will be the year he shines – I hope it is...

Another imported star looking to deliver the goods this year will be MVR-D Suzuki's Matiss Karro. Blazing fast in sand, Karro's first full year in the GPs was unfortunately thwarted by a mid-season injury and he could fare no better than 22nd in the final standings. With a bit of luck Karro could easily be a consistent top 10 runner in 2010 and with age on his side it's quite possible he'll add a second world title to the mantelpiece in the next few years.

ROUND 9 – KEGUMS, LATVIA, JUNE 27

Kegums is in the Ogre district of Latvia and as well as featuring on the MX1/MX2 calendar for the first time in '09 has been a regular stop on the sidecarcross world championship circuit for some years. The sandy circuit is only 60kms from Riga airport which makes it an easy and potentially cheap race to visit providing you can find the right flight from the UK.

ROUND 10 – UDDEVALLA, SWEDEN, JULY 4

Uddevalla is a track that's famous for the rock face that overlooks the entire circuit which is where most of the Scandinavian race fans perch themselves for the entire weekend! Quite slick and one-lined in places, the Swedish circuit actually provides plenty of good racing as passes take some planning and mistakes are easily made meaning riders swap positions almost continuously through the pack. As one of only two GPs held north of Chepstow – Kegums is the other – Uddevalla is always packed out with northern European race fans and has a great party vibe!

ROUND 11 – LOMMEL, BELGIUM, AUGUST 1

Not the prettiest of places, the circuit is situated on the filthy backside of Lommel's industrial area. As a full-time practice facility the circuit is ever changing although one thing will always stay the same – the mega deep sand surface the track is sat on! Probably the most physically demanding circuit in the world, Lommel is situated just to the south east of Eindhoven – no more than 10 miles from Valkenswaard – in an area that's quite literally saturated with GP motocross tracks. Makes an excellent end to a week's riding holiday!

ROUND 12 – LOKET, CZECH REPUBLIC, AUGUST 8

Loket is one of the coolest venues on the GP calendar and has a real old-school vibe to it. Not a favourite among the racers – mostly due to the high speeds and gravelly track surface – the Loket circuit still produces plenty of good bar-to-bar racing and some very aggressive passing. Loket is around 90 miles from the country's capital of Prague and situated close to the spa town of Karlovy Vary that you'll no doubt recognise from the James Bond movie Casino Royale!

ROUND 13 – CAMPO GRANDE, BRAZIL, AUGUST 22

Sounding something like a dodgy steaming-hot caffeinated beverage straight outta your local overpriced posh coffee shop, Campo Grande is actually the new home of the Brazilian MX GP. A brand-new circuit built within the city limits, it's expected the Brazilian round could attract up to 50,000 spectators but will you be one of them? Non-direct flights to Campo Grande International Airport are available but with prices currently at £1000-plus for the 30-hour journey it might actually be better to give this one a miss and catch it on Motors TV or Freecaster instead – god bless modern technology! Spare a thought for the British championship riders who are also contesting the GPs as they have a Maxxis round one week either side of this event. Good planning there ACU type people – it's no wonder Shaun Simpson's giving the domestic title chase a miss this year!

ROUND 14 – LIEROP, THE NETHERLANDS, SEPTEMBER 5

Lierop is a classic Dutch sand circuit – tree-lined, as elevationless as a pancake with long whoop-filled straights, mile-long ruts and bottomless berms. Situated just east of Eindhoven and north east of Valkenswaard it's another easy European race to visit and a good one to go to too because one way or another it always produces great racing.

ROUND 15 – FERMO, ITALY, SEPTEMBER 12

It's been a massive 21 years since Fermo last held a motocross GP – then battled out by current Teka team boss Eric Geboers and CCM's Sporting Director Dave Thorpe on factory 500cc Hondas – but it's back on the schedule with a bang for 2010! A tough old-school Italian hillside circuit with some brand-new facilities, the final round of the 2010 world championship should be a corker and seeing as though it's only around an hour's drive from Ancona airport it's not too difficult to get there either. This race is gonna be an awesome event and a fitting end to the gruelling MX1, MX2 and WMX championships.

SMOKIN' HOT!

THE MXGP SIDESHOW FOR PRE-MIX LOVERS >>

Two-stroke race fans will have plenty to cheer about at eight of the GPs this summer as the UEM 125cc 2T European Championship gets set to rock the Fermo (Italy), Bellpuig (Spain), Chepstow (Great Britain), St Jean d'Angely (France), Teutschenthal (Germany), Uddevalla (Sweden), Loket (Czech Republic) and Mantova (Italy) rounds.

While there are no big names as such racing in the inaugural running of this championship it shouldn't be any less exciting as 40 up n' comers go bar to bar on their screaming two-smokers. Although entry lists are yet to be confirmed we're led to believe that battling Brits Jordan Booker, Daniel Hutchinson and Ryan Houghton will all be taking part which will surely give us something to try and outscreeam the screamers about at Chepstow at the end of May.

EARLY STARTER!

THE NEW-LOOK MAXXIS BRITISH MX CHAMPIONSHIP GETS OFF TO A FLYER AT LITTLE SILVER WHERE THE FEBRUARY WEATHER ENSURES CONDITIONS AREN'T EXACTLY OVER-EASY – ALTHOUGH ANDERSON AND OSBORNE STILL KEEP THINGS SUNNY SIDE UP...

Words by **Sean Lawless** Photos by **Sutty**

The Little Chef connoisseurs among us should all be familiar with the plateful of artery-clogging goodness known as an Early Starter – pork sausage, back bacon, free range griddled egg, two hash browns and baked beans, served with toast or fried bread – which ranks close to porky perfection as the hungry traveller's breakfast of choice.

But, as confusing as it may be, there are other types of early starter. Me and Sutty for example, saddling up TranDawg™ and hitting the road at stoopid o'clock for the 280-mile trip to Little Silver for the opening round of the Maxxis British Motocross Championship. And then there's the championship itself – kicking off in February instead of its traditional start date in March.

So in theory a fly on the wall could have seen two early starters, enjoying Early Starters, on their way to an early starter! I say in theory because in fact we were both enjoying a legendary Little Thief Olympic Breakfast – basically an Early Starter with lots of tasty extras. And that's kinda what we were treated to when we finally rolled up in Devon...

For 2010 the Maxxis series has had a serious revamp with three 20-minute plus two-lap races replacing the established two 30-minute plus two format. Then there's the all-new Superpole contest – basically a two-lap staggered start sprint for the top 12 riders in timed practice in each class to determine gate pick. And at Little Silver we're also treated to the opening round of the WMX series.

Like I said, lots of tasty extras – but would the finished dish match up to the mouth-watering menu?

The long-term forecast in the week leading up to Little Silver ain't good with heavy rain and 40mph winds predicted for race day but the weather gods are smiling – well, maybe more like grimacing – come Sunday morning when the rain stays off and the wind drops but it's still brass monkeys and mightily muddy. But this is British motocross in February so anyone who feels like complaining needs to man-up and grow a pair.

Out on the track for MX2 Superpole there are 12 pairs of hairy boys battling their way around what's a pretty old-school hillside circuit. And it's Bike It Cosworth Yamaha's Zach Osborne who mans up the most to claim pole by 1.7 seconds from LPE Kawasaki's Kristian Whatley with

Jake Nicholls bringing his HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK machine home third. MX1 Superpole falls to Buildbase CCM-RACING's Stephen Sword by 0.6 seconds ahead of CAS Honda's Russian newbie Evgeny Bobryshev and PAR Honda's defending champ Brad Anderson.

With a short start straight before the first left-hander gate pick's vital but lightning-fast reactions are still the most important factor and it's Nicholls – a rider not exactly famed for his starts – who's consistently quickest out of the blocks all day in MX2.

The opening points-paying moto of the season sees The Reverend battling it out round the first corner with team-mate Graeme Irwin before the pair begin to inch their way clear of the chasing pack led by DB Racing Honda's Elliot Banks-Browne and Osborne. But Nicholls slips off on lap three and drops back to fourth as Irwin motors to his debut Maxxis moto win, comfortably ahead of Banks-Browne and PAR Honda's Martin Barr. Osborne comes home fourth followed by Whatley with Nicholls ending the opener in sixth.

It's Nicholls at the front again at the start of race two and the 19-year-old stays there for a couple of laps before Osborne picks up the pace and maintains a clear gap to the flag. Whatley's third from Banks-Browne, Barr and MVR-D Suzuki's Matiss Karro.

Race three and once again The Reverend's at the front of the pack, this time holding the lead until half-distance when – once again – Steve Dixon's super-fast American import pushes past for his second win of the day. Nicholls resists strong pressure from Barr in the closing laps for second with Whatley, Irwin and Alan Keet rounding out the top six.

Up in MX1 there's a new contender for 2010 – CAS Honda's Bobryshev – and he opens his Maxxis account with a gate-to-flag win, even allowing himself the luxury of an early fall without losing the lead. MAR Honda's fast Frenchie Pascal Leuret is a race-long second and PAR Honda's Ray Rowson takes third from Alex Snow on the Albion Kawasaki, PROPPA.com Honda's James Noble, Bike It Cosworth Yamaha's Jason Dougan and Anderson who recovers from a bad start and crash-filled first race.

And if it's a tough opening moto of the series for Brad it's even worse for a few more pre-season favourites with Swordy only managing ninth behind

>>



Swanie leads TC at the start of the second MX1 moto



QUOTE UNQUOTE

GARETH SWANEPOEL >>

"It didn't start off so great but the second race I led for quite a long time but made a small mistake and crashed and I won the third race. I still don't think I'm riding as well as I could be and I'm definitely not doing the bike justice – the bike is so good, I think at the moment it's a couple of steps ahead of my riding."

TOM CHURCH >>

"The first race I just had a nightmare on the first lap and went down twice but I came through as good as I could. It was really hard to pass. In the second I got a really good start and was battling for the lead with Swanie and I went into the back of him and stalled. But I felt good – I knew I could run that pace – and in the last one I took it a bit easier, settled down and when Brad made a mistake I was able to get past him and reel Swanie in but he upped it a little and I couldn't find a way past. It was close and just a shame I couldn't come away with a podium today."

BRAD ANDERSON >>

"The first one was terrible. I got a bad start and kept on trying too hard and kept on crashing but I got a better start in the second and pushed on even harder, passed Swanie and Bobryshev and come out with a win. I didn't get a good start in the last one either but I pushed on but made a daft little mistake and Tom got past me – again, I was trying too hard to go for the win – but I'll fight another day."



Ando gets his title defence off to a great start with the overall verdict in MX1



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QUOTE UNQUOTE

JAKE NICHOLLS >>

"My starts are better but I struggled all day a little bit with my arms. First race my hand came off going round a corner which is why I crashed but I managed to salvage a sixth in that one. The other two I got good starts and then tried to ride sensible – when I ride good I ride real aggressive but round here I found it hard to be aggressive. So I tried to stay smooth instead of hanging it out. We struggled a little bit with the set-up in the first two but got it a little bit better for the last one. But it's been a good start to the year and I know I can ride a lot better on other tracks."

MARTIN BARR >>

"I'm just real happy to start the season off in good form – this time last year I'd already had a DNF. It's a long season and I didn't want to do anything stupid at the first round. I only got this deal sorted four weeks ago and haven't had a lot of time on the bike but I've got it working really well and I just want to keep on improving."

GRAEME IRWIN >>

"I've been working so hard for the last two-and-a-half months – it's been flat-out – but it's starting to pay off. It's going to be a long season. I've rode injured today – I dislocated my shoulder a week ago – so for sure as the season goes on I'm going to get stronger and stronger and hopefully I can have some more wins."

MEL POCOCK >>

"I've struggled on the starts real bad today – I obviously need to practice them some more. The track was real gnarly and I've got a real bad cold so I've struggled with that too. I've had a few crashes and made some silly mistakes – I rode a bit tense. But I'm here at the first round, last year I was at the first round in a cast because I was injured. So I'm up for a full season and I'm going to do well."

ZACH OSBORNE >>

"It's been almost a perfect start to the season for me, I couldn't ask for much more. I haven't been on the bike that much this month, I've just been doing lots of physical stuff. I really didn't expect this result today but obviously I'm happy with it and I'm looking forward to the next one."



Bike It Cosworth Yamaha's Zach Osborne takes the MX2 series lead at Little Silver

PBM Kawasaki's Gordon Crockard with CAS Honda's Gareth Swanepoel 10th and Buildbase CCM-RACING's Tom Church back in 12th.

For race two it's back to business as usual for Anderson. Swanie leads the way for four laps before the North Easterner muscles his way past and then clears off for a commanding 13-second win from Bobryshev who gets ahead of his team-mate just before half-distance. Swanie ends the race in third a further 13 seconds back, just ahead of Swordy with Dougan managing to hold off Crockard for fifth.

But it's another sucky moto for TC. The Marshfield man is initially second but hits Swanie's rear wheel as he lines him up for a pass, stalls and then tips over. Restarting in 30th he shows real testicular fortitude to battle back up to 11th on a track where passing's a

problem in the rutted conditions.

The final MX1 moto of the day is all about Swanie who nails the holeshots and then keeps a cool head to win as behind him Anderson, TC and Swordy trade passes with TC finally coming home second from his team-mate and the reigning champ. After a pair of below-par 14ths MVR-D Suzuki's Carl Nunn takes fifth from Dougan as Bobryshev's chances of the overall evaporate with an early crash that forces him to charge from 31st on the first lap up to 13th at the flag.

Both WMX motos are as expected a Natalie Kane benefit with the HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK rider five-and-a-half seconds quickest in qualifying, 1:16 ahead in race one and 1:43 clear in race two as she continues her preparations for an assault on the 2010 women's world title.



Jake Nicholls has got his starts nailed but suffers from pumpage of the arm



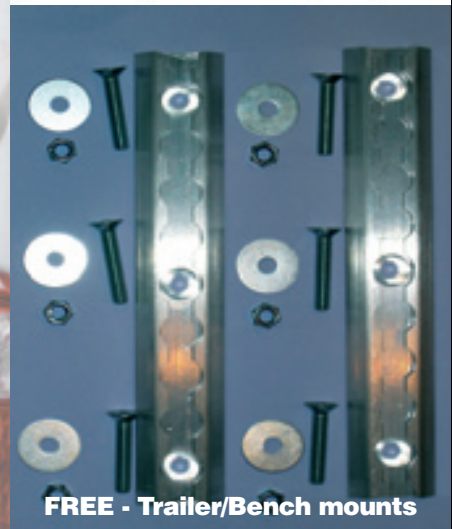
Irish teenager Graeme Irwin takes a shock race one victory in the MX2 division



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SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Brad Anderson	PAR Honda	57 points
2	Gareth Swanepoel	CAS Honda	56
3	Evgeny Bobryshev	CAS Honda	55
4	Stephen Sword	Buildbase CCM	50
5	Jason Dougan	Bike it Cosworth Yamaha	46
6	Alex Snow	Albion Kawasaki	45
7	Gordon Crockard	PBM Kawasaki	42
8	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM	41
9	James Noble	PROPPA.com	32
10	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	30

MX2 >>

1	Zach Osborne	Bike it Cosworth Yamaha	68 points
2	Jake Nicholls	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	59
3	Martin Barr	PAR Honda	56
4	Kristian Whatley	LPE Kawasaki	54
5	Graeme Irwin	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	53
6	Elliot Banks-Browne	DB Racing Honda	52
7	Alan Keet	Danger UK KTM	41
8	Mel Pocock	Bike it Cosworth Yamaha	38
9	Shane Carless	Suzuki	33
10	Matiss Karro	MVR-D Suzuki	32

WMX >>

1	Natalie Kane	HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK	50 points
2	Ellen De Winter	KTM	40
3	Danielle Hipgrave	KTM	36
4	Stacey Fisher	Honda	35
5	Kerry Wilson	MVR-D Suzuki	34



Swordy stays in the MX1 hunt with fourth on the day

QUOTE UNQUOTE

EVGENY BOBRYSHEV >>

"The Superpole was good for me because I made a good lap to finish second on the gate. The first race was good. I got a great start so I just pushed as hard as I could. I crashed on the second lap but kept the bike going and managed to stay in the lead. I felt so happy to win so I was looking forward to the second race. I didn't get such a good start but managed to come through and finish second which I was also happy with. The third race was quite bad. I crashed with Anderson in the first lap and I also made some mistakes in the race but still finished 13th. I am happy with being on the podium. I'm really happy with the team and the bike, I just can't wait to get out racing some more."

STEPHEN SWORD >>

"It's been a mixture of a day. It's all good points for me but it never really came together in a race. First one I went down in the start and coming back to ninth was the best I could have done in a 20-minute race. Second one my tear-off snapped on the pin and I went from something like fifth back to 13th and then came back up to fourth. The last one I was sixth or seventh out of the gate and rode steady but not how I should. The track was difficult and everyone was making mistakes. I was aiming for a podium but I think I ended up fourth. There's a long way to go yet, I'm in one piece and we know what we have to do – the speed's there but today was all about the start really."

NATALIE KANE >>

"I didn't know who's been going better over the winter so I was just hoping to win and I did so I'm happy. I've been living down in Ipswich for the winter and training with Jake and Steve [Potter] and when I'm riding now I just don't feel tired at all so it's paying off. I'm going to try and do the Red Bull Pro Nationals with the MX2 men for a couple of races to get ready for the world championship."



Russian import Evgeny Bobryshev nails a gate-to-flag win on his Maxxis debut

NEW FORMAT

WHAT THE RIDERS RECKON >>

"There are good and bad things. I prefer longer races but that's the way it is so I just have to get on with it."

Martin Barr

"I'm happy with the format. It was pretty rushed but still cool. The Superpole was good, real good."

Jake Nicholls

"I think it's good. The only thing is it's a big difference from GPs between the 20 and the 40 minutes but I think it'll spice things up, especially with the Superpole and as today's proved it makes things much more exciting for sure."

Graeme Irwin

"It's very intense and the races are still 25 minutes so they're still quite long and for them to be close together like that

was real tough work, not only on me but on the mechanics and the bikes also. I think it's keeping us on our toes and the spectators seem to be liking it."

Mel Pocock

"I quite like it – it gave me a second and third chance today! And I enjoyed the Superpole to be honest, I thought it was going to be a bit of a disaster but I loved it."

Gareth Swanepoel

"I love it! I'm right into it. My whole career racing in Ireland has always been three 20s and I really like it. It gives me three chances at the start and I think it's a better test. And it's so intense the guys still get tired so fitness is still an important factor."

Gordon Crockard

"It's delivered on the racing it just seems so late – it's like riding in the dark. But when the clocks change I guess that'll come better. It's just hard when you go down on the start – you need another 10 minutes to come through."

Tom Church

"The format's perfect – it couldn't be better. It's a good change – I get so sick of doing 30-minute motos all summer long so I think this format is really good. I love the Superpole, I think it's great for the championship."

Zach Osborne

"It's too much of a rush. No-one gets a break. The mechanics are flat-out, especially when it's wet. I think we should go back to two races to be honest. The tracks are good because the top riders

like it rougher but the mechanics have no time and what's going to happen if the bike breaks? I think everyone's going to kick up a fuss eventually."

Brad Anderson

"It's worked well. It is what it is and you've got to get on with it – I prefer the longer races but it's making it interesting for the spectators."

Stephen Sword

"I don't mind it. I've always liked a three-moto format and I think it being a bit shorter makes it better because you haven't got to pace yourself, you can go out there and try and be aggressive. It was a bit unfortunate today because it was one-line and hard to pass but there are some good races coming..."

Carl Nunn

He may be the far side of 40 but Paul Eddy shows he's still got what it takes when the going gets tough



RESULTS

CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS >>

1	David Knight	KTM	1398.07
2	Paul Edmondson	Suzuki	1417.27
3	Daryl Bolter	KTM	1429.28
4	Si Wakely	Husqvarna	1443.86
5	Tom Sagar	Suzuki	1448.69
6	Greg Evans	KTM	1453.66
7	Ashley Wood	Gas Gas	1475.24
8	Rory Mead	Yamaha	1503.39
9	Ollie Moyce	Husaberg	1536.45
10	Phillip McLaughlin	TM	1536.61



LASHED!

HEAVY RAIN DOES ITS BEST TO RUIN THE OPENING ROUND OF THE METZELER ACU BRITISH ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP WHERE DAVID KNIGHT STARTS HIS TITLE DEFENCE IN STYLE

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

“I’m glad that’s over, the conditions were horrendous,” says David Knight as the opening round of the 2010 BEC series comes to a premature finish. With heavy rain falling from daybreak the normally dry and sandy Thelford Forest event becomes a quagmire forcing the organisers to bring the event to an early end.

Just as he did last year – but in a much more convincing manner – David Knight claims victory to get his championship off to a winning start. The fastest rider on each of the event’s four special tests, Knighter eventually finishes 20 seconds clear at the top of the Championship class – as well as soaked to the skin.

“I’m pleased with the result, the way I rode and my bike but it was unbelievable how quickly and badly the test and course turned into one long rut. You couldn’t really attack properly because it was so easy to make a mistake.”

One rider who finds out how costly a mistake can be is Suzuki rider Tom Sagar. Second to DK with one test to go, a high-speed get off drops him to fifth overall. “The bike was pinned in fourth gear when I let go,” explains Tom. Despite his frustrations he still tops the Enduro 2 class.

Showing that being the top side of 40 and very much a part-time racer these days hasn’t slowed him down too much, Paul Edmondson claims the overall runner-up spot and tops the Enduro 1 class for Suzuki. Using his years of experience to good effect, Fast Eddy finishes at the head of a trio of E1 class riders

and not too far behind Knighter.

“I can’t believe I got second overall,” grins Eddy. “I guess when the conditions get so bad no-one can go 100 per cent, I just made sure I didn’t make any mistakes which wasn’t easy with no front brake on the final test.”

Next up is KTM’s Daryl Bolter, who like many is pleased simply to have finished the event in one piece. “It was so slippery everywhere, I was struggling to hold onto my bike a lot of the time. I didn’t really enjoy the event because of the weather but I’ll take the result.”

Husqvarna’s Si Wakely is another who makes it through the event without problems and earns a well-deserved fourth ahead of Sagar in fifth. Welshman Greg Evans gets the runner-up spot in E2 and sixth overall having seen his result affected by a slightly off-the-pace penultimate test.

With just 10 riders finishing the event having not picked up time penalties Ashley Wood is the first rider to see his result improve as he places seventh having been the ninth fastest rider on the tests. BEC first-timer Rory Mead from New Zealand certainly doesn’t shy away from rolling up his sleeves at the Muntjac and secures himself a solid top 10 result with eighth overall.

Despite the atrocious weather conditions Rory can’t wait to return to the BEC. “The event was great, a good few levels higher than races back home in New Zealand. The BEC and The Tough One were both great events for me, I can’t wait to get back and do more races in the UK.”



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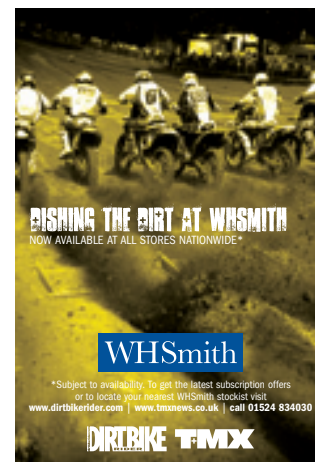


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Charlie's been in impressive form over the winter



WILDEN WONDER!

HE'S NOT EVEN EIGHT YEARS OLD YET BUT ALREADY CHARLIE KENT IS SHOWING HIS SKILLS AGAINST THE OLDER LADS OF THE 65cc DIVISION

Eleven-year-old Alex Walton and a little lad who reaches the grand old age of eight on March 24 and goes by the name of Charlie Kent have been two of the more interesting spots over the winter months in Wilden MXC action. Both guys have proven themselves in completely different ways and at the two extreme ends of the age range in the Junior 65cc ranks.

Alex is looking to exit the tiddler section this year with a championship crown in place. And considering the recent facts that include a seventh place finish in the BSMA ranks last term and his current winter form that has been blistering at times, Alex may well be the 2010 BYMX champion elect if he can get the better of Jamie Osborne and the rest. Charlie Kent on the other hand is just settling out on his very first national series campaign.

If you happen to bump into Charlie at any of this year's Red Bull events make sure you have at least 20 minutes to spare because he's a confident, chatty little kid who just loves to bend your ear – and that exuberance certainly translates into positive action when he gets out on the track.

I first bumped into Charlie as a six-year-old just as he was starting out on the MX trail. He used to team up with Dane Reeves in Auto action and while Dane has gone down the Auto

national championship route with great success, Charlie isn't really interested in fiddling about at that level. If you pay a visit to the Kent household in Shropshire you won't find a room full of Auto trophies as Charlie is currently one little kid in a big hurry – and this year he's going straight for the jugular in 65cc national racing.

Over the last few months at Wilden and Polesworth in what has been the worst winter for 25 years you might have expected a seven-year-old with just 18 months experience on his MX clock to struggle a bit. Well, I have to tell you that on the full adult circuits in what has been either tricky, sticky mud or frozen solid conditions Charlie has thrived! At the time of going to press officially one individual second place race finish along with a third place overall have been Charlie's stand-out highlights. However, for those who watched more carefully we know he did actually win one race at Wilden but in a mud covered mess of a day he unfortunately eluded the lap scorers' gazes.

Charlie is without doubt full of confidence and ability for one so young but there is another aspect of his personality that has impressed over the past few months and that's his sheer grit and seemingly unflappable determination to succeed. It shows up in no better situation than off the startline as for months now Charlie has been a little pocket rocket into the first turn. He shows

absolutely no fear and he certainly has the ability to mix it at the front with the bigger and older guns – but right now that's before he has the racing stamina or track craft to make it all stick and claim the bigger scalps at the higher levels.

Taking a look at Charlie's own time frame for success he certainly has plenty of it on his side with three more full seasons ahead to emulate the achievements of Conrad Mewse and Ben Watson in winning a national title at just 10 years old. But make no mistake, that is Charlie's ultimate aim.

Having said all of that, no-one is expecting Charlie to do anything other than learn the ropes of national racing this coming season as hype and over-expectation are the last things that he needs right now. He's only just on the very first rung of the tricky national ladder with a heap of hard work in front of him. The name of the game in 2010 is to look, learn and simply enjoy. After chatting to Charlie with parents Rachel and Neil recently it's obvious to see that they all know exactly where Charlie is right now and the scale of the task ahead.

It'll be interesting to keep an eye on Charlie's progress throughout the coming season as I think I know just what sort of improvement he will have made by October – and when I come to think of it I have a pretty good idea where Charlie will be come 2012.



Liam – and his Donjoy brace – crack on in the gym

BACK IN BUSINESS!

LIAM BRACED TO SALVAGE HIS SEASON

How quickly things can change in this wonderful MX game of ours – especially it would seem if you are Liam Garland right now. His accident at the Liverpool SX round in January was initially diagnosed as being so serious that he would be sitting it out on the sidelines for anything up to 12 months with cruciate knee ligament damage.

Right now it's still very much the case that Liam does have a serious knee problem but it's also a fact that he will be sitting on the startline at Foxhill this very weekend (March 13/14) for the Red Bull EYC opener. So how the heck does all of that work? Well with the help of a Robo Cop style knee brace from Donjoy coupled up to a never-say-die attitude from Team Garland all is possible it seems. Here's the full story...

With Liam's plight being advertised both nationally and locally following his accident at the Echo Arena in Liverpool the Garland family were subsequently contacted by a knee specialist physiotherapist who works with some of the best known sporting talent in the country.

Having first assessed Liam's knee he then put them onto another specialist surgeon for a second opinion. Although this surgeon confirmed that Liam had indeed taken the cruciate away with some bone, he also stated that Liam could with the right physiotherapy and a top-flight knee brace compete this year without doing any further damage. His opinion was that the damage had been done and ultimately will require surgery together with a six-month lay-off but this could wait until the end of the season.

Liam was obviously delighted with this news and immediately embarked on a rigorous three-times-a-day physio regime to strengthen the muscles required to support his left knee. The expert physio is being supervised by Wayne Devonald at his Reactivate Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine unit down in Hampshire.

Liam has now picked up extra support from Fly clothing, Forma boots, Smith goggles, Ipone oil, Delta pads, CZ chains and TMC Moto X in Ireland. TMC have supplied him with a full BBR-framed CRF150 which Mat at MX Zone will tune and prepare, also fitting a full Tokyo Mods engine kit together with a special LRS suspension set-up.

Just two weeks before Foxhill Liam gave the knee brace and new bike a test outing locally and it all confirmed to his delight that with the Donjoy knee brace in place the 2010 game is now well and truly back on – albeit very experimental at this stage to evaluate just how the knee stands up.

BOOTBOYS!

WE CATCH UP WITH EYC ACES...

With the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup already under way by the time you read this we thought we'd catch up with 'the chosen ones' from last year's Fox Boot Camp programme – Jake Millward and Sid Evans – to see how their preparations for this year's series are coming along.

In 2009 both Jake and Sid really impressed the MC Federation and Fox staff with their stylish riding and attitude towards racing. They may not have won the titles but they applied themselves at each and every round and gave everything in every moto – Sid in particular constantly battled hard against his nemesis Conrad Mewse who ended up taking the 65cc class.

Well for 2010 both riders are stepping up a class and onto bigger bikes so the learning curve steepens again as they aim to make the grade as professional racers further down the line. So we put a call into the lads on a school night to see how it was going and give them a break from their homework.

"It's all going good since we stopped racing but I cannot wait to get started again," says Sid. "It feels ages since we finished racing last year. The Fox crew have been so supportive, they've sent me three full sets of race kit already and the racing hasn't even started. It's cool, they want to know what I've been up to and I email them regularly, I'm so pumped that I was one of the boot camp winners.

"All my training is going good and I've grown into the KTM 85, it's a perfect fit. I was probably too big for the 65 anyway. The difference in power is quite a big step up so that took a little while to get used to but we've been to Dunkerque and Belgium and I've been doing loads of riding in the freezing cold! I feel ready to race and looking forward to seeing how I get

on in the small wheeled 85s. I did okay in the supercross and got fourth in series after a few crashes but at least I've stayed fit and now I'm just really looking forward to getting started."

Jake has also been chomping at the bit to get his season under way as he swaps his KTM 85 for the 125 rather than jumping directly onto a 250F.

"I've decided to ride a 125 because of my size," explains Jake. "I don't think I'm strong enough to race a 250F just yet and I was riding the 125 before the end of last season anyway and still racing the 85. I won my first races on a 125 so that was good, especially after finishing the season on a bit of downer after busting my foot up at the last Elite Youth Cup.

"I said I'd be pleased if I got a top five at the beginning of the year which I did in the end but after being in third position for most of the year it was a little bit gutting to finish fifth. Fifth is good but third is better! I've got my new bike now and I'll be running that in soon and I'm just looking forward to getting started and the challenge of racing a new class.

"There's some good riders in the Rookies so I know it's going to be tough but I'm feeling confident and really like the bike. I'm quite light so I think I have an advantage on the 125 as I'll really be able to throw it around and pick some lines that the others might struggle to use. I've been to Belgium riding all the deep sand tracks to try and build my strength up and I've been going to the gym after school.

"The Rookies class is one step closer to being a pro so I want to give myself a good opportunity to become professional. Fox have been awesome and sent me loads of gear so I'd really like to thank them. I feel a little bit pro already – hopefully one day I will be."



Sid and Jake – with Fox's Adrian Phillips – show off their spoils of war at Stoneleigh



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BROTHERS IN ARMS!

WE CATCH UP WITH OLLIE AND ARCHIE OSMASTON AS THEY
PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO THEIR PRE-SEASON PREP...

Photo by jnphtography.co.uk

Brothers who achieve great success in winning silverware at youth national level are nothing new with the likes of the Watson, McCanney, Houghton, Pocock, Kelly and Worrall families all hitting the mark in recent years.

And in 2010 hopes are high in Wisborough Green, West Sussex, that the Osmaston boys – Oliver and Archie – will add their names to this illustrious little list. While nine-year-old Archie will again be out on a 65cc KTM in the Junior sections, 12-year-old Ollie switches from his KTM to an awesome Pro Circuit Honda 150F and will be an odds-on favourite as he goes off in pursuit of a long overdue national crown or two!

The Osmastons seem to have been keeping a low profile over the winter months so Rage decided to catch up with them and pop a few questions.

Q: Hi guys, can you tell us what you've been up to lately?

A: "Since the end of our 2009 race season, which was the ACU team event, our practice has been limited to only four weekends at Dunkirk. But before the worst winter weather hit both Ollie and Archie were having lots of fun learning what the Honda and new KTM 65 were capable of here on our home track.

"Our pre-season training really started in earnest in mid February. We travelled to Spain to train with John van den Berk for three weeks. The boys experienced his tuition last year and made lots of new friends from all over Europe so they were both chomping at the bit to go again."

Q: Can you give Rage a little insight into the decision making process that saw Ollie switching from the KTM to the Honda.

And also how is the change looking pre-season?

A: "Ollie's Hondas are of the Pro Circuit variety – very fast and hopefully more reliable than his old KTMs. He has been practising new techniques of gating which look very promising. Getting off the line effectively was a major problem on the KTMs last year, especially on uphill starts.

"Keeping the machine flowing on track is another change with four-stroke racing being different. It means choosing different lines but I have to say Ollie's picking it up fast. One thing that also amazes me is the drive the 150 produces, especially through the berms – I have never seen Ollie's bars so near the dirt. Big smiles all round."

Q: Ollie has been attracting a lot of attention pre-season but how are things with young Archie and how are the family last-minute preparations going?

A: "Archie has been putting in the same amount of hours and effort as Ollie and showing loads of improvement and general understanding of the sport. We are going to sticker up his bikes like little Hondas to match Ollie's.

"Gareth Denness at Pro Decals is helping us out, as is Tony Robinson at Motocross Racing Services. Scott at Moto Z Tyres is also providing help as well as Martin at our local MX shop, Motoward. And much thanks to all of them for their valued assistance.

"We're at Foxhill for the first round of the Elite the weekend after our return from Spain, after that we go to Holland for five days training with John's brother, Edward van den Berk. It will be an intense black sand session in preparation for the first round of the BYMX at Leuchars. Then full-on racing – Elite and BYMX with a few Dutch races in the mix."



CLUBWARS!

ELITE YOUTH LEAGUE EXPLAINED

South Somerset MX have already got the MC Federation's Elite Youth League under way at Whiteway Barton but if you're not sure how it works here's all you need to know...

A motocross championship is decided on who is best over the year but it doesn't just have to be for individual riders – the Elite Youth League makes it an inter-club competition. The idea behind it is to develop an incentive for riders to become more involved with their local club and move MX on from being an individual sport. It also gives club riders a chance to race for a nationally recognised title, even if they are unable to compete in the Elite Youth Cup at national level.

The Elite Youth League will cater for riders in all of the recognised classes from Auto up to Rookie and at the request of clubs will also include a class for AMX. The basis of the League is that selected riders at nominated club events will score points towards that club's League total and, ultimately, their League position at the end of the season.

With many clubs organising their events in different ways – running different length races, different numbers of blocks, heats and qualifiers and different numbers of events each year – you may wonder how the League can be run fairly for everybody. It's something the MCF have put a lot of thought into.

For starters, at the beginning of the season each participating MCF club will nominate 10 of their events to count as League events. With the electronic entry management system developed by the MCF, 42 riders per event will be randomly selected and nominated as League points scorers for the event. Points will be allocated to the riders depending upon their overall position – this will eliminate the problem of clubs running different numbers of races. The MCF office will manage the League table that will be published on a regular basis both here and on the dedicated League page of the MCF's newsletter.

As a final twist, extra points will be scored by each individual club's riders who compete at the MCF Grand Slam final event at the end of the season. These points will be added to the club's total and the final League standings calculated at the event. Apart from the prestige of being the Elite Youth League champions, the winning club will not have to pay any insurance costs for the 10 events they nominate for the following year's League.

If you wish to know more about the Elite Youth League you can contact the MC Federation on 01865 343666 or email secretary@mcfederation.com

GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

Then contact our Youth Editor Mike Gurney at mikegurney55@yahoo.co.uk



MACKENZIE ST



MACKENZIE ST

T-BONED!

HIS AUSSIE DEBUT LASTS THE LENGTH OF THE START STRAIGHT BEFORE HE'S TORPEDOED INTO THE NEXT STATE BUT APART FROM THAT – AND A BAD-ASS TROPICAL STORM – LIFE'S A BEACH FOR BILLY

Words by Billy MacKenzie

Well my first little race didn't go to plan – in fact I only made it halfway round the first corner before it all went wrong! Not to worry though, the race wasn't important, it was like a little warm-up race. But still I was a bit pissed off I couldn't do any laps because I was well up for it – I ain't raced since the Nations!

The lead up to this race was pretty cool, I'd been riding hard during the week and my bike was working perfect so I had high expectations of myself and was confident I could go out and win. The race was at a track called Cooloom, very similar to Mildenhall and Leuchars with dark sand, nice sweeping corners and literally only five minutes drive from one of the nicest surf beaches on the coast.

The Aussies make a big weekend of their racing – okay, I know everyone does but over here it kinda feels like a holiday and racing in one. No-one stresses over here, the drive to the racing is quite leisurely and everyone on this occasion rented a little holiday beach apartment right on the seafront of Cooloom beach. The town was over-run with little Toyota Hiace vans (the MX van of choice over here) and the beach was full of motocross riders trying to boogie board and surf, me included!

I bought this cheap little bodyboard thing and tried my best in the surf but after about 20 minutes I noticed a burning on my stomach. I'd been rubbing against the weird grippy stuff on the board and almost took about five layers of skin off in the process, including one of my moles! It started to bleed and the whole experience just wasn't fun anymore – then I started to freak myself out about sharks, especially with the blood, so I retired to the sun-bathing part with Harriet and watched, kinda like I did with the race!

Practice was a bit muddy, the whole month I've been riding in 40-plus degree heat, then for the first race it decided to p**s down! And when it p**ses down over here we're not talking little showers or spitting all day – it comes along and dumps up to three inches of rain in a few hours. Normally this is pretty perfect for riding as the track gets a great watering but this weekend we just happened to be in the middle of a tropical storm heading up the coast!

So, like I said, practice started off a bit muddy and it rained the whole way through. I done the schoolboy thing and got out first because I didn't wanna get filled in with only three laps of practice! Yep, that's right, we only got three laps of practice! So I did my best to remember the track and I had a nice flow going, keeping my feet up in the nice long ruts and hitting all the big jumps second lap. I was feeling pretty good and the atmosphere at the race was really nice and chilled.

The first race came around and I was as keen as mustard – I was probably down the line a good five races before the start of the MX1 Open! I just didn't wanna miss the race! I finally see a few 450s going to the holding area

so I push my bike down all excited and pull my peg! Yup, peg pick for the line! I tried to cheat and have a look in the bucket before the guy came – I saw #4 and tried to pick it but he saw me so he picked a peg for me and gave me #16! I was being obvious about it though, I wasn't being sneaky. I just wanted to see how seriously the pegman took his weekend job.

I also got told off for wearing flip flops on the track in the morning before I signed on. I didn't know you weren't allowed to wear open toe footwear at the races but that's all I had and so when I went to sign on I walked through the little shed thing out onto the start straight and got a roasting off some power-happy track official – she obviously loves her weekend job and makes sure the 'rules apply'. So I stood there trying to explain that the signing on is only literally five metres from where we were standing and surely she can turn a blind eye this once but I was told no and that I would have to go borrow some shoes from someone! I was laughing in my head at her but managed to get my mechanic to do it for me as she stood by to make sure I didn't run across the start straight. I felt like streaking the track just to p**s her off!

Back to the pegs then so, yeah, I got peg #16 but when it came time to go on the line it turned out #16 wasn't my peg choice but rather my gate as all the gates were numbered! It wasn't too bad though, I was pretty much in the middle – a bit further out from where I would have liked but I thought I could make the best of it.

My starts are normally pretty good so the gate dropped and I was out down the start in third. I had two guys on the inside of me going into the first fast sweeping right-hander (Craig Anderson and Todd Waters I think). I held it on as long as possible into the corner, trying to out-brake the two on the inside. There was a big berm built up from practice that hadn't been graded on the first corner and when I realised I wasn't gonna beat them into the corner I decided to try to square them off and hold it open down the inside on the next straight. So just as I push it in to make the turn the berm kinda bogs my speed a little with it being soggy, I grab a bit of clutch, look up the next straight and then this Suzuki fully T-bones me from down the inside! We both go down real big and I get run over by three bikes, straight into my back too. It hurt! My bike was totalled, the casings got smashed and it was p**sing oil everywhere. My back was hurting pretty bad too so that was the end of my day! I managed a whole start straight! Never mind, the important race is March 28 so I'm sure I'll be sorted for then.

I have another one of those little races this weekend in Tivoli, just an hour down the road from where I'm staying. But the weather this week has been crazy! I know I was giving it the big one about Oz being great weather and Britain sucking but it's had a bit of a turn around this week! Another three days of mental heavy rain has the whole town flooded. They have those little metre markers in the dips of the road

so you know how deep it is before risking it in your car – well those things are up around half-a-foot and that's with great drainage in this town. I heard someone say yesterday that there has been three inches of rainfall in the last 36 hours. That's a lot! So I'm not sure if the race will even be on this weekend...

As for riding since my last column, I started to up the intensity of the motos, building again from 20s to 40s but absolutely on the limit! It's been super-tough – especially in the heat – but it makes you feel so good at the end of the week. I've been doing my interval cycling and running sessions with my new mate and training buddy Matt Haworth so as far as riding and training goes I feel awesome and ready to go, I just need to get round the first corner!

We also had a week of testing all our new parts for the engine – lots of nice little Pro Circuit and factory Kawa parts – so the bike feels strong and ready to race. In testing I have been a good four to five seconds faster than the next fastest guy on the track so I'm pretty confident my speed is there, I just need to convert it to laps now!

So apart from racing and riding the month has been pretty low key with not much sight-seeing apart from Valentine's Day. I took Harriet to Byron Bay and stayed in a little tree house thing near the backpackers' lodge. It was really cool – we spent three days just chillin' on the beach, eating nice food and having a drink with the locals. Byron Bay is super cool, lots of people our age just surfing and having BBQs all day long. We lounged around in the hammocks, just eating lots of nice food and chatting to everyone, then on Saturday night we met up with a couple of Harriet's friends who were over doing a bit of travelling – twin girls and one of them used to go out with Stephen Sword back in the day when we were bitter rivals! So it was quite funny to hear stories from the other side over a few glasses of wine!

So that's about it for this month, the Byron Bay adventure made me realise that I wanna get out and see more of Oz while I'm here. I've done most of my hard work now – or rather the important work – during the last two months and my rent is up in the middle of May so right now I've bought myself a little camper and am currently kitting it out with the help of a few qualified people! So when the rent is up I'm gonna hit the road like we used to do for the GPs and travel round the campsites, hit the beaches and visit loads of different tracks for the season. Cycle up the coast, run down the beaches, ride different tracks – it's gonna be awesome! Pics to come of the camper when it's finished!

Finally, well done to Zach and Brad for the British! I wanna try get back for Lyng and do the French GP but DO NOT take that as 100 per cent – it's only an idea in my head at the moment because I have a month free. Hey to everyone at home...

BD 1/11





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